Fonte: Biblioteca Digital de Literatura de Países Lusófonos

LITERATURA BRASILEIRA

Textos literários em meio eletrônico

The Guarany, by José de Alencar

Edição de Referência:

Overland Monthly and Out West magazine, San Francisco.

From vol. 21, issue 127, July 1893 to vol. 22 issue 131, November 1893.

Edited by Daniel Serravalle de Sá and Emilene Lubianco de Sá.

Agradecimentos a Daniel Serravalle de Sá e a Emilene Lubianco de Sá

pela gentil colaboração.

INDEX

PART FIRST

I. SCENERY

II. LOYALTY

III. THE BANDEIRA

IV. THE HUNT

V. BLONDE AND BRUNETTE

VI. THE RETURN

VII. THE PRAYER

VIII. THREE LINES

IX. LOVE

X. AT DAWN

XI. AT THE BATH

XII. THE OUNCE

XIII. THE DISCLOSURE

XIV. THE INDIAN WOMAN

XV. THE THREE

PART SECOND

I. THE CARMELITE

II. YARA

III. THE EVIL GENIUS

IV. CECY

V. BASENESS

VI. NOBLETY

VII. IN THE RAVINE

VIII. THE BRACELET

IX. THE WILL

X. LEAVE-TAKING

XI. MISCHIEVOUSNESS

XII. THROUGH THE AIR

XIII. THE PLOT

XIV. THE BALLAD

PART THIRD

I. THE DEPARTURE

II. THE PREPARATIONS

III. WORM AND FLOWER

IV. AT NIGHT

V. GOD DISPOSES

VI. THE REVOLT

VII. THE SAVAGES

VIII. DISCOURAGEMENT

IX. HOPE

X. THE BREACH

XI. THE FRIAR

XII. DISOBEDIENCE

XIII. THE COMBAT

XIV. THE PRISONER

PART FOURTH

I. REPENTANCE

II. THE SACRIFICE

III. THE SORTIE

IV. THE REVELATION

V. THE MAGAZINE

VI. THE TRUCE

VII. THE FLIGHT

VIII. A BRIDE

IX. THE PUNISHMENT

X. A CHRISTIAN

XI. EPILOGUE

The Guarany

Brazilian novel

Translated by James W. Hawes

THE GUARANY. FROM THE PORTUGUESE OF JOSÉ MARTINIANO DE ALENCAR.

[Many books have been printed in America, from those of Mayne Reid and yet earlier writers, to that of Mrs. Alice Wellington Rollins, giving the impressions of travelers in Brazil, though even these chiefly confine themselves to the neighborhood of Rio and the course of the Amazon. But very few books have been published in English written by Brazilians, or giving any view of their life as seen from within. This is the OVERLAND'S warrant for giving space to a translation of probably the most popular of Brazilian stories. How little Brazilian literature is known to the English speaking world is shown by the fact that in none of the American or English cyclopaedia or biographical dictionaries, save Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia for 1877 (p.591), and Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography (in the latter more briefly and with a misspelled name), is mentioned at all the most shining light of Brazilian letters, José Martiniano de Alencar. He was the son of a priest, and was born in Ceará, in 1829,was educated for the law at São Paulo, and established himself at Rio, where he gained distinction as a jurist and contributor to the journals of the day. He was in 1868 elected deputy from Ceará, and continued such to the end of his life, in 1877, at one time in the Government as Minister of Justice, but more often in the opposition. As deputy he spoke seldom, but with great effect. His principal works are a poem, "Iracema", and two romances, "Ubirajara" and "The Guarany". The latter has been translated into German, and an opera founded on it has been played in New York. It has never been printed in English till\OL. XX-. 7.now, it is believed, when we present it to our readers, translated by James W. Hawes. ED.]

PART FIRST:

THE ADVENTURERS

I. SCENERY.

FROM one of the summits of the Organ Mountains glides a small stream, which flows northerly, and enlarged by the springs which it receives in its course of ten leagues, becomes a considerable river. It is the Paquequer. Leaping from cascade to cascade, winding like a serpent, it dozes at last in the plain, and empties into the Parahyba, which rolls majestically in its vast bed. Vassal and tributary of that king of waters, the little river, haughty and overbearing to its rocks, bows humbly at the feet of its sovereign. It loses then its wild beauty; its waves are calm and peaceful as those of a lake, and do not rebel against the boats and canoes that glide over them. A submissive slave, it feels the lash of its master. It is not at this point that it should be seen, but three or four leagues above its mouth, where it is still free. There the Paquequer rushes rapidly over its bed, and traverses the forests foaming and filling the solitude with the noise of its career.

Vegetation in those regions formerly displayed all its luxuriance and vigor; virgin forests extended along the margins of the river, which flowed through arcades of verdure, with capitals formed by the fans of the palm trees.

In the year of grace 1604, the place we have been describing was deserted and uncultivated; the city of Rio de Janeiro had been founded less than half a century, and civilization had not had time to reach the interior.

However, on the right bank of the river stood a large and spacious house, built on an eminence, and protected on all sides by a steep wall of rock. The esplanade on which the building was placed formed an irregular semi-circle, containing at most two hundred square yards. On the north side there was a stairway of freestone, made half by nature and half by art.

Descending two or three of the broad stone steps, one found a wooden bridge solidly built across a wide and deep fissure in the rock. Continuing to descend, one reached the brink of the river, which lowed in a graceful curve, shaded by large gamelleiras and angelins, that grew along its banks. On each side of the stairway was a row of trees, widening gradually, enclosing like two arms the bend of the river; between the trunks of these trees a high hedge of thorns made that little valley impenetrable.

The house was built in the plain and simple style of architecture that our ancient dwellings still show. It had five windows in front, low, wide, and almost square. On the right side was the principal door, which opened upon a courtyard, enclosed by a stockade, covered with wild melons. On the left a wing, with two windows over looking the defile of the rock, extended to the border of the esplanade.

In the angle that this wing made with the rest of the house was a garden, a pretty imitation of the rich, vigorous, and splendid nature that the sight embraced from the top of the rock. Wildflowers from our forests, small tufted trees, a

grass plot, a tiny stream of water simulating a river and forming a little cascade,-all this the hand of man had created in the scanty space with admirable art and beauty.

In the rear, entirely separated from the rest of the dwelling by a wall, were two storehouses or porches, which served as an abode for adventurers and dependents. Finally, at the end of the little garden, on the brink of the precipice, was seen a thatch cabin, whose supports were two palm-trees that had sprung up in the crevices of the rock.

Now that we have described the locality where most of the events of this story are to take place, we may open the heavy rosewood door, and enter into the house. The principal room displayed a certain luxury, which seemed impossible at that period in a wilderness like this. The walls and ceiling were white washed, but ornamented with a wide border of flower-work in fresco; between the windows hung two portraits representing an aged nobleman and an elderly lady, and over the canter door was painted a coat of arms.[1] A large red damask curtain, on which the same arms were reproduced, concealed this door, which was rarely opened, and which led into a chapel. Opposite, between the two center windows, was a small canopy, closed by white curtains with blue loops. High-backed leather chairs, a rosewood table with turned feet, a silver lamp suspended from the ceiling, constituted the furniture of the room, which breathed a severe and gloomy air.

The inner apartments were in the same style, save the heraldic decorations. In the wing of the building, however, this aspect suddenly changed, and gave place to a fanciful and dainty one, which revealed the presence of a woman. Indeed, nothing could be more beautiful than this room, in which silk brocatels were mingled with the pretty feathers of our birds, entwined in garlands and festoons around the border of the ceiling, and upon the canopy of a bedstead standing on a carpet of skins of wild animals. In a corner an alabaster crucifix hung upon the wall, with a gilt bracket at its feet. At a little distance, on a bureau, was seen one of those Spanish guitars that the gypsies introduced into Brazil when expelled from Portugal, and a collection of mineral curiosities of delicate colors and exquisite forms. Near the door was an article that at first sight could not be defined; it was a kind of bedstead or sofa of variegated straw, interwoven with black and scarlet feathers. A royal heron impaled, ready to take flight, held in its beak the curtain of blue taffeta that concealed this nest of innocence from profane eyes, opening it with the points of its white wings that fell over the door. The whole breathed a sweet aroma of benzoin.

II. LOYALTY.

THE dwelling we have described belonged to Dom Antônio de Mariz, a distinguished Portuguese nobleman. In 1567 he had accompanied Mem de Sá to Rio de Janeiro, and had aided in founding the city, and in consolidating the dominion of Portugal in that captaincy[2]. He also served as superintendent of the royal revenue, and afterward of the custom house at Rio de Janeiro, and showed in all these employments his zeal for the public good, and his devotion

to the king. A man of valor and experienced in war, accustomed to combats with the Indians, he rendered great services in explorations. In reward for his deserts the governor, Mem de Sá, had granted him a square league of land in the interior.

The defeat of Alcacerquibir[3] and the Spanish domination that followed it changed his life. A Portuguese of the old school, he considered that he was bound to the king of Portugal by the oath of nobility, and that he owed fealty and homage to him alone. When, then, in 1582, Philip II. was proclaimed in Brazil as the successor of the Portuguese monarch, the aged noble man sheathed his sword and retired from the service. Afterward, finding his arm and valor of no avail to the king of Portugal, he swore that he would at least maintain his fidelity till death. He took his family, and settled on that land which Mem de Sá had granted him. There, standing on the eminence where he was about to fix his new home, and looking proudly over the vast region that opened around him, he exclaimed:

“Here I am a Portuguese! Here a loyal heart, which has never proved false to its oath, can breathe at ease. In this country, which was given me by my king and conquered by my arm, in this free country, thou shall reign, Portugal, as thou shall live in he souls of thy sons. I swear it!”.

This had taken place in April, 1593;on the following day they began building a small dwelling, which served as a provisional residence, until the artisans from Portugal had constructed and decorated the house with which we are already acquainted.

Dom Antônio had gained a fortune during the earlier years of his life as an adventurer, and not merely from the caprice of nobility, but in consideration for his family, sought to give to this dwelling, built in the midst of a wilderness, all the luxury and conveniences possible.

He not only made periodical expeditions to the city of Rio de Janeiro, to purchase goods from Portugal, which he obtained in exchange for the products of the country, but he had also ordered from the kingdom some mechanics and gardeners, who employed the resources of nature, so bountiful in that region, in providing his family with every necessary. Thus the house was a genuine castle of a Portuguese nobleman, except for the battlements and barbican, which were replaced by the wall of inaccessible rocks, which offered a natural defense. Under the circumstances this was necessary, because of the savage tribes, which, although they always retired from the neighborhood of places inhabited by the colonists, nevertheless frequently made incursions and attacked the whites by stealth.

In a circle of a league from the house there were only a few cabins, in which lived poor adventurers, eager to make a rapid fortune, who had settled in that place in companies of ten and twenty, in order more easily to carry on the contraband trade in gold and precious stones, which they sold on the coast. These, in times of danger, always sought refuge with Dom Antônio de Mariz, whose house took the place of a feudal castle in the middle ages. Thus, in case

of attack by the Indians, the dwellers in the house on Paquequer could count only on their own resources, and therefore, Dom Antônio, like a wise and practical man as he was, had provided against every occurrence.

He maintained, like all captains engaged in discoveries in those colonial times, a band of adventurers, who served him in his explorations and expeditions into the interior. They were brave, fearless men, uniting with the resources of civilized man, the cunning and agility of the Indian, of whom they had learned; they were a sort of guerrillas, soldiers and savages at the same time. Dom Antônio, who knew them, had established among them a rigorous but just military discipline.

When the time for selling the products arrived, which was always prior to the departure of the armada for Lisbon, half of the band of adventurers went to the city of Rio de Janeiro, made the sale, purchased the necessary articles, and on their return rendered their accounts. Half the profits belonged to the nobleman as chief; the other was divided equally among the forty adventurers, who received it in money or in kind. Thus lived, almost in the midst of the wilderness, unrecognized and unknown, this little community, governed by its own laws, its own usages and customs; its members united together by ambition for wealth, and bound to their chief by respect, by the habit of obedience, and by that moral superiority which intelligence and courage exercise over the masses. For Dom Antônio and his companions, into whom he had infused his own fidelity, this region of Brazil was only a fragment of free Portugal; here only the Duke of Bragança, the legitimate heir of the crown, was recognized as king; and when the curtains were drawn back from the canopy in the hall, the arms of Portugal were revealed, before which all foreheads bowed.

The nobleman's family was composed of four persons: his wife, Dona Lauriana, a lady from São Paulo[4], imbued with all the prejudices of nobility and all the religious superstitions of that time; for the rest, a good heart, - a little selfish, yet not incapable of an act of self-sacrifice; his son, Dom Diogo de Mariz, who was later to follow the career of his father, and who succeeded him in all his honors and privileges; still in the flower of youth, who spent his time in warlike excursions and in hunting; his daughter, Dona Cecília, a girl of eighteen, who was the goddess of that little world, which she illumined with her smile and cheered with her playful disposition and attractive ways; Dona Isabel, his niece, whom Dom Antônio's companions, though they said nothing, suspected of being the fruit of the aged nobleman's love for an Indian woman whom he had taken captive in one of his explorations.

III. THE BANDEIRA.

IT was midday. A troop of horsemen, consisting, at most, of fifteen persons, was pursuing its way along the right bank of the Parahyba. They were all armed from head to foot; besides his large war-sword, which struck the

haunches of his animal, each of them carried two pistols at his girdle, a dagger at his side, and an arquebuse slung by a belt over his shoulder.

A little in advance two men on foot were driving some animals laden with boxes and other packages covered with tarpaulins, to protect them from the rain. As often as the horsemen, who were proceeding at a gentle trot, overcame the short distance that separated them from this group, the two men, not to retard the march, would mount on the haunches of their animals and again obtain the lead.

At that time those caravans of adventurers that penetrated into the interior of Brazil in search of gold, brilliants, or emeralds, or for the discovery of rivers and lands yet unknown, were called bandeiras. That which at this moment was following the bank of the Parahyba was such an one; it was returning from Rio de Janeiro, where it had been to sell the products of its expedition into the gold region.

On one of the occasions, when the horsemen approached the pack animals, a good-looking young man of twenty eight, who was riding at the head of the troop, managing his horse with much grace and spirit, broke the general silence.

“Come, boys!” said he cheerfully to the drivers, “a little exertion and we shall soon reach home. We have only four leagues farther to go.”

One of the troop, on hearing these words, put spurs to his horse, and advancing some yards, placed himself at the young man’s side.

“You seem to be in a hurry to get home, Senhor Álvaro de Sá,” said he with a slight Italian accent, and a half smile whose expression of irony was concealed by a suspicious air of friendliness.

“Certainly, Senhor Loredano; nothing is more natural when one is traveling than the desire to get home.”

“I do not say it is not; but you will admit, too, that nothing is more natural when one is traveling than to spare his animals.”

“What do you mean by that, Senhor Loredano?” asked Álvaro with an angry movement.

“I mean, cavalier,” replied the Italian in a mocking tone, measuring with his eye the height of the sun, “that we shall reach home today before six o’clock.”

Álvaro colored. “I do not see why you take special notice of that; we must get there at some hour, and it is better it should be by day than by night.”

“And so it is better it should be on a Saturday than any other day,” replied the Italian in the same tone.

A new blush overspread Álvaro's cheeks, and he could not disguise his confusion; but recovering himself, he gave a loud laugh, and answered:

"Zounds, Senhor Loredano! you are talking to me in riddles; on the faith of a cavalier, I do not understand you."

"So it should be. Scripture tells us that none is so deaf as he that will not hear."

"Ah! a proverb, I see. I wager that you learned this but now in São Sebastião[5].Was it some aged nun, or some doctor of divinity that taught you it?" said the cavalier jokingly.

"Neither the one nor the other, cavalier; it was a trader in the *rua dos Mercadores*, who at the same time showed me costly brocades and pretty pearl ear-rings, very appropriate for a present from a gallant cavalier to his lady."

Álvaro blushed for the third time. Clearly the sarcastic Italian found means of connecting with all the young man's questions an allusion that disconcerted him; and this in the most natural tone in the world.

Álvaro wanted to end the conversation at this point; but his companion proceeded with extreme good nature, "You did not, per chance, enter the shop of this trader of whom I have spoken?"

"I don't remember; I think not, for I scarcely had time to transact our business, and not a moment was left to look at ladies' gewgaws," said the young man coldly.

"It is true," asserted Loredano with pretended frankness; "that reminds me that we only remained five days in Rio de Janeiro, while at other times it was never less than ten or fifteen."

"I had orders to act with all haste; and I believe," he continued, fixing a severe look on the Italian, "that I owe an account of my actions only to those whom I have given the right to command them."

"Per Bacco, cavalier! You understand everything contrarily! No one asks you why you do whatever you like; and you will also find that everyone thinks after his own manner."

"Think what you please!" said Álvaro, shrugging his shoulders and quickening the pace of his horse.

The conversation was broken off. The two horsemen, a little in advance of the rest of the troop, traveled in silence side by side. Álvaro now and then glanced along the road, as if to measure the way they still had to go, and at other times seemed lost in thought.

On these occasions the Italian would cast upon him a furtive glance, full of malice and scorn, and then continue to whistle between his teeth a song of the *condottieri*, of whom he exhibited the true type. A swarthy face, covered by a long black beard, through which his contemptuous smile permitted the whiteness of his teeth to glisten; sharp eyes, a

wide forehead, which his broad brimmed hat falling upon his shoulders left uncovered; a tall stature, and a strong, active, and muscular constitution: these were the chief traits of this adventurer.

The little cavalcade had left the riverbank, which no longer afforded a passage, and had turned into a narrow path in the forest. Although it was little after two o'clock, twilight reigned in the deep and shady vaults of verdure; the light in passing through the dense foliage was entirely absorbed, and not a ray of the sun penetrated into this temple of creation, for which the ancient trunks of *acaris* and *araribas* served as columns. The silence of night with its vague and uncertain noises and its dull echoes slept in the depth of this solitude, and was scarcely interrupted by the step of the animals, which made the dry leaves crackle. It seemed that it must be six o'clock, and that declining day was enveloping the earth in the dark shadows of evening. Álvaro de Sá, although accustomed to this illusion, could not help being surprised for an instant, when, roused from his meditation, he found himself suddenly in the midst of the clare-obscure of the forest. He involuntarily raised his head, to see if through the dome of verdure he could discover the sun, or at least some ray of light to indicate the hour.

Loredano could not repress a sardonic laugh. "Have no anxiety, cavalier; we shall be there before six o'clock; I assure you of it."

The young man turned toward the Italian with a scowl.

"Senhor Loredano, it is the second time that you have spoken that word in a tone that displeases me; you appear to want to tell me something, but you lack the courage to speak out. Once for all, speak openly, and God keep you from touching on subjects that are sacred."

The Italian's eyes flashed, but his countenance remained calm and serene. "You know that I owe you obedience, cavalier, and I shall not be wanting. You wish me to speak clearly; to me it appears that nothing I have said can be clearer than it is."

"To you, no doubt; but this is no reason why it should be so to others."

"But tell me cavalier, does it not seem clear, in the light of what you have heard from me, that I have divined your desire to get back as soon as possible?"

"As to that, I have already avowed it; there is no great merit in divining it."

"Does it not also seem clear that I have observed with what celerity you have made this expedition, so that here we are, in less than twenty days, at the end of it?"

"I have already told you that I had orders, and I believe you have nothing to say against it."

"Certainly not; an order is a duty, and a duty is fulfilled with pleasure, when the heart is in it."

“Senhor Loredano!” said the young man, placing his hand on the hilt of his sword and gathering up the reins.

The Italian, pretending not to have seen the threatening gesture, continued:

“So everything is explained. You received an order; it was from Dom Antônio de Mariz, doubtless?”

“I do not know that anyone else has the right to order me,” replied the young man haughtily.

“Naturally, in pursuance of this order,” continued the Italian politely, “you set out from the Paquequer on Monday, when the day appointed was Sunday.”

“What! did you notice that, too?” asked the young man, biting his lips with vexation. “I notice everything, cavalier, and have not failed to observe likewise that you have made every exertion, in pursuance of the order of course, to arrive just the day before Sunday.”

“And have you observed nothing more?” asked Álvaro, with a tremulous voice, making an effort to restrain him self.

“Another little circumstance has not escaped me, of which I have already made mention.”

“And what is it, if you please?”

“O, it’s not worth the trouble of repeating; it’s a matter of little consequence.” “Nevertheless, tell it; nothing is lost between two men who understand each other,” replied Álvaro with a threatening look.

“Since you wish it, I must satisfy you. I notice that the order of Dom Antônio,” - and the Italian emphasized that word, - “directs you to be at the Paquequer a little before six o’clock, in time to hear the evening prayer.”

“You have an admirable gift, Senhor Loredano; it is to be lamented that you employ it in trifles.”

“On what would you have a man spend his time in this wilderness, if not in looking at his kind, and seeing what they are doing?”

“It certainly is a good amusement.”

“Excellent. Look you, I have seen things occurring in the presence of others which no one else perceived because no one would take the trouble to observe as I do,” said the Italian, with an air of pretended simplicity.

“Tell us about it; it must be curious.”

“On the contrary, it is the most natural thing possible; a youth gathering a flower, or a man walking by night in the starlight. Can anything be simpler?”

Álvaro turned pale this time.

“Do you know one thing, Senhor Loredano?”

“I shall know it, cavalier, if you do me the honor to tell me.”

“It appears to me that your cleverness as an observer has taken you too far, and that you are playing neither more nor less than the part of a spy.”

The adventurer raised his head with a haughty gesture, placing his hand on the handle of a large dagger which he carried at his side; at the same instant, however, he controlled this movement, and resumed his habitual good nature.

“You are joking, cavalier.”

“You are mistaken,” said the young man, spurring his horse, and placing himself by the side of the Italian. “I speak seriously; you are an infamous spy! But I swear by God, that at the first word you utter I will break your head as I would crush a venomous serpent.”

Loredano’s countenance did not change; it maintained the same immobility; but his air of indifference and sarcasm disappeared under the expression of energy and malice that lent force to his powerful features. Fixing a stern look on the cavalier, he replied:

“Since you take the matter in this way, Senhor Álvaro de Sá, it is proper for me to tell you that it does not belong to you to threaten; between us two you ought to know which it is that should fear.”

“Do you forget to whom you are speaking?” said the young man haughtily. “No, sir, I remember everything; I remember that you are my superior, and also,” he added in a hoarse voice, “that I have your secret”. And stopping his horse, the adventurer left Álvaro to go on alone, and joined his companions.

The little cavalcade continued its march along the path, and approached one of those openings which occur in virgin forests, resembling vast vaults of verdure. At that moment a frightful roar made the forest tremble, and filled the solitude with harsh echoes. The drivers turned pale, and looked at each other; the horsemen cocked their arquebuses, and proceeded slowly, looking cautiously through the branches.

IV. THE HUNT.

WHEN the cavalcade reached the border of the opening, a curious scene was passing there. Standing in the center of the great dome of trees, and leaning against an aged tree riven by lightning, was seen an Indian in the vigor of youth.

A simple cotton tunic, which the aborigines call *aimará*, fastened at the waist by a band of scarlet feathers, fell from his shoulders down to his knees, and revealed his figure, delicate and slender as a wild reed. Upon the transparent whiteness of the cotton his copper-colored skin shone with a golden light; his short, black hair, smooth visage, and large, oblique eyes, with black, active, sparkling pupils, his powerful but well-shaped mouth, and white teeth, gave to his somewhat oval face the rude beauty of grace, force, and intelligence. His head was encircled by a leather band, to the side of which were fastened two variegated feathers, which, describing a long spiral, touched his neck with their black points. He was tall of stature; his hands were delicate; his agile and nervous leg, ornamented with a bracelet of yellow berries, rested upon a foot, small, but firm in walking, and fleet in running.

He had his bow and arrows in his right hand, while with his left he held vertically before him a long fork of wood blackened in the fire. Near him on the ground were lying an inlaid carbine, a small leather bag for ammunition, and a rich Flemish knife.

At that instant he raised his head and fixed his eyes on a tree some twenty distant, which was imperceptibly agitated. There, through the foliage, were distinguished the cat-like undulations of a black and shining back, spotted with gray; at times two pale and glassy rays, like the reflections from some rock crystal struck by the sunlight, were seen shining in the gloom.

It was an enormous ounce[6]. The animal was beating his flanks with his long tail, and moving his monstrous head as if seeking an opening through the foliage to make his spring. A sort of sardonic and ferocious smile contracted his black lips and showed the line of yellow teeth; his dilated nostrils breathed forcibly, as if already enjoying the smell of the victim’s blood.

The Indian, smiling and indolently leaning against the dry trunk, lost not one of these movements, and awaited his enemy with the calmness and serenity of one contemplating an agreeable scene; his fixed look alone revealed a thought of defense.

Thus, for a brief moment, the beast and the savage eyed each other; then the tiger crouched and was about to make his leap, when the cavalcade appeared on the border of the opening. Then the animal, casting around a glance full of blood, hesitated to risk an attack.

The Indian, who at the movement of the ounce had bent his knees slightly and grasped the fork, straightened himself up again. Without taking his eyes from the animal, he saw the troop, which had halted on his right. He extended his arm, and with a kingly wave of the hand, for he was king of the forests, motioned the horsemen to continue their march. Then as the Italian, with his arquebuse at his face, was trying to get aim through the leaves, the Indian stamped on the ground in token of impatience, and pointing to the tiger and putting his hand on his breast, exclaimed, “It is mine! mine only!”

These words were spoken in Portuguese, with an agreeable and sonorous pronunciation, but in a tone of energy and resolution.

The Italian laughed. “By my faith, an original claim! You do not want your friend offended? Very well, Dom Cazique,” he continued, slinging his arquebuse over his shoulder; “he will thank you for it, doubtless.”

In answer to this warning, the Indian pushed contemptuously with his foot the carbine lying on the ground, as if to signify that had he wished he might already have shot the tiger.

All this passed rapidly, in a moment, the Indian never for an instant removing, his eyes from his enemy. At a signal from Álvaro the horsemen proceeded on their march, and entered again into the forest. The tiger uttered a roar of joy and satisfaction. A noise of breaking branches was heard, as if a tree had fallen in the forest, and the black form of the beast passed through the air; at a single leap, he had gained the other tree, and placed a considerable distance between himself and his adversary.

The savage comprehended at once the reason of this; the ounce had seen the horses. Quick as the thought, he took from his girdle a little arrow, slender as a porcupine’s quill, and drew his great bow, which exceeded by a third his own height. A loud whiz was heard, accompanied by a cry from the beast; the little arrow discharged by the Indian had penetrated his ear, and a second, cutting the air, struck him on the lower jaw.

The tiger turned, threatening and terrible, and with two leaps approached again. A death-struggle was to ensue. The Indian knew it, and waited calmly as on the first occasion; the disquiet that he had felt for a moment lest his prey should escape him had disappeared.

This time the tiger did not delay; scarcely did he get within some fifteen paces of his enemy, when he gathered himself up with extraordinary elasticity, and sprang like a fragment of rock riven by lightning. He struck on his great hind paws, with his body erect, his claws extended to rend his victim, and his teeth ready to devour him.

But before him was an enemy worthy of him in strength and agility. The Indian had bent his knees a little, and held in his left hand the long fork, his only defense; his fixed look magnetized the animal. Just as the tiger sprang he bent still more, and shielding his body presented the fork. The beast felt it close around his neck, and struggled.

Then the savage straightened himself with the flexibility of a rattlesnake making its thrust, and placing his feet and back against the trunk, sprang upon the ounce, which, thrown on its back, its head fastened to the ground by the fork, struggled against its conqueror, striving in vain to reach him with its claws.

When the animal, almost choked by the strangulation, made only a weak resistance, the savage, still holding the fork, placed his hand under his tunic and drew out a cord of *ticum*[7] that was wound around his waist in many coils. At the end of this cord were two nooses, which he opened with his teeth and passed over the fore-paws, binding

them tightly together; then he did the same with the hind legs, and ended by tying the jaws together, so that the ounce could not open its mouth.

At that moment a wild and timid agonti appeared on the border of the forest. The Indian sprung for his bow, and stopped the little animal in the midst of its career. He then broke two dry branches of *biribá*, and drawing fire by rubbing them rapidly together set about preparing his game for dinner.

In a little while he had finished his savage repast, which he accompanied with the honeycombs of a small bee that constructs its hives in the ground. He then went to a brook that flowed near by, drank a little water, washed his hands, face, and feet, and prepared to take his departure. Passing his long bow between the tiger's legs, he suspended it to his shoulders, and bending under the weight of the animal, which struggled with violent contortions, took the path along which the cavalcade had gone.

Some moments afterward the thick shrubbery opened and an Indian appeared upon the now deserted scene, completely naked, except for a mantle of yellow feathers. He cast an astonished look around, cautiously examined the still-burning fire and the remnants of the game, and then lay down with his ear to the ground, and thus remained for some time. Rising, he entered again into the forest, in the direction the other had taken a short time before.

V. BLONDE AND BRUNETTE.

EVENING was approaching. In the little garden of the house on the Paquequer a pretty maiden was swinging lazily in a straw hammock fastened to the branches of a wild acacia, which, as it was shaken, let fall some of its small and fragrant flowers.

Her large blue eyes, half closed, at times opened languidly as if to drink in the light, then the rosy lids drooped again. Her red and moist lips were like the wild lily of our fields, bedewed by the vapor of night; her sweet and gentle breath exhaling formed a smile. Her complexion, white and pure as a tuft of cotton, was tinged on the cheeks with rose color, which, gradually fading, died out on the neck in pleasing and delicate lines.

Over her white muslin dress she wore a light sack of blue velvet gathered at the waist by a clasp; a kind of pearl-colored ermine, made of the soft clown of certain birds, bordered the neck and sleeves, setting off the whiteness of her shoulders and the harmonious contour of her arm arched over her breast. Her long fair hair, negligently twined in rich tresses, left bare her white forehead, and fell around her neck confined by a delicate loop of golden straw, braided with admirable skill and perfection. Her slender little hand was playing with a branch of the acacia, which bent beneath the weight of flowers, and which she grasped from time to time to give a gentle oscillation to the hammock. This maiden was Cecília.

What was passing in her mind at that moment it is impossible to describe; her body, yielding to the languor produced by a sultry afternoon, allowed her imagination to run at large. The warm breath of the breeze that came laden with the perfume of honeysuckles and wild lilies excited still more that enchantment, and conveyed perhaps to that innocent soul some undefined thought, one of those myths of the girlish heart at eighteen. She dreamed that one of the white clouds that were passing through the blue sky, coming into contact with the rocks opened suddenly, and a man appeared and fell at her feet, timid and suppliant. She dreamed that she blushed, and a bright flush kindled the rosy hue of her cheeks, but little by little this chaste embarrassment disappeared, and ended in a gracious smile which her soul brought to her lips. With palpitating breast, all tremulous and at the same time pleased and happy, she opened her eyes, but turned them away in disgust, for, instead of the handsome cavalier of whom she had dreamed, she saw at her feet a savage. She then as she dreamed exhibited a queenly anger, contracting her fair eyebrows and stamping with her little foot upon the grass. But the suppliant slave raised his eyes, so full of grief, of mute prayers and resignation, that an inexpressible feeling overcame her, and she became sad, and ran away and wept. Then her handsome cavalier came, wiped away her tears, and she felt consoled, and smiled again; but ever kept a shade of melancholy, which her cheerful disposition only succeeded little by little in driving away.

At this point in her dream the little inner door of the garden opened, and another maiden, scarcely touching the grass with her light step, approached the hammock. She was of a type entirely different from Cecília; the true Brazilian type in all its grace and beauty, with its enchanting contrast of melancholy and sportiveness, of indolence and vivacity. Her large black eyes, dark and rosy complexion, black hair, disdainful lips, provoking smile, gave her face a seductive power quite irresistible.

She stopped in front of Cecília, and could not disguise the admiration that her cousin's delicate beauty inspired; and an imperceptible shadow, perhaps of envy, passed over her countenance, but vanished at once. She sat down on one side of the hammock, leaning over the maiden to kiss her, or see if she was asleep. Cecília, awakened from her revery, opened her eyes and fixed them on her cousin.

“Lazy girl!” said Isabel smiling.

“True!” replied the maiden, seeing the great shadows cast by the trees “it is almost night.”

“And you have been sleeping since the sun was high, have n’t you?” asked the other playfully.

“No, I have n’t slept a moment; but I don't know what is the matter with me today, that I feel so sad.”

“You sad, Cecília! It would be easier for the birds not to sing at sunrise.”

“You won’t believe me then?”

“But pray, what reason have you to be sad, - you who the livelong year wear only a smile?”

“It’s apparent enough! Everything tires in this world.”

“O, I understand! You are tired of living here in this wilderness.”

“Nay! I am so accustomed to seeing these trees, this river, these mountains, that I love them as if they had witnessed my birth.”

“Then what is it that makes you sad?”

“I don’t know; I lack something.”

“I don’t see what it can be. Yes, I see now!”

“See what?” asked Cecília with wonder.

“O, what you lack.”

“But I don’t know myself,” said the maiden smiling.

“Look,” replied Isabel, “there is your dove waiting for you to call it, and your pretty fawn watching you with its soft eyes; you only lack the other wild animal.”

“Pery!” exclaimed Cecília, laughing at her cousin’s idea.

“The same! You have only two captives to frolic with, and as you do not see the ugliest and most ungraceful you are unhappy.”

“But now I think of it,” said Cecília, “have you seen him today?”

“No; I don’t know what has become of him.”

“He went away day before yesterday afternoon; I hope no accident has befallen him,” said the maiden with some alarm.

“What accident do you suppose can happen to him? Does he not all day long roam the woods, and run about like a wild beast?”

“Yes; but he never stayed away so long before.”

“The most that can have happened to him is to have been seized with longings for his old free life.”

“No,” exclaimed the maiden with vivacity; “it is not possible that he has abandoned us so.”

“But then, what do you think he can be doing in the forest?”

“True!” said Cecília pensively. She remained a moment with her head down, almost in sorrow; in that position her eye fell upon the fawn, which had its dark pupils fixed upon her with all the soft melancholy that Nature had embodied in its eyes. She held out her hand and snapped her fingers, at which the pretty animal leaped for joy, and came and laid its head in her lap.

“You will not abandon your mistress, will you?” said she, passing her hand over its satin hair.

“Never mind, Cecília,” replied Isabel, observing her tone of melancholy; “you can ask my uncle to get you another to domesticate, and it will prove tamer than your Pery.”

“Cousin,” said the girl with a slight tone of reproof, “you treat very unjustly that poor Indian, who has done you no ill.”

“But, Cecília, how would you have one treat a savage that has a dark skin and red blood? Does not your mother say that an Indian is an animal, like a horse or a dog?”

These last words were spoken with a bitter irony, which the daughter of Antônio Mariz comprehended perfectly.

“Isabel!” exclaimed she, offended. “I know that you do not think so, Cecília, and that your kind heart does not look at the color of the face to learn the soul. But the others?… Do you think I do not perceive the disdain with which they treat me?”

“I have told you again and again that it is a suspicion on your part; all like you and respect you as they ought.”

Isabel shook her head sadly. “It is very well for you to console me; but you, yourself, have seen whether I am right.”

“O, a moment of aversion on the part of my mother…”

“It is a very long moment, Cecília,” answered the girl with a bitter smile.

“But listen,” said Cecília, putting her arm round her cousin’s waist. “You know that my mother is a very severe mistress, even to me.”

“Don't trouble yourself, cousin; this only serves to confirm still more what I have already said: in this house you are the only one that loves me; the rest despise me.”

“Well then,” replied Cecília, “I will love you for all; have I not already asked you to treat me as a sister?”

“Yes; and that gave me a pleasure which you cannot imagine. If I only were your sister!”

“And why will you not be? I would have you so.”

“To you, but to him…” This him was murmured in her soul.

“But, look you, I demand one thing.”

“What is it?” asked Isabel.

“It is that I shall be the elder sister.”

“In spite of your being the younger?”

“No matter! As elder sister, you must obey me?”

“Certainly,” answered her cousin, unable to keep from smiling.

“Well then!” exclaimed Cecília, kissing her on the cheek, “I don’t want to see you sad, do you hear? or I shall be displeased.”

“And were you not sad a little while ago?”

“O, it’s all gone now!” said the girl, springing lightly from the hammock. In fact, that sweet melancholy that had possession of her a little while before, as she was swinging and thinking of a thousand things, had entirely disappeared; the spirit of joyous and bewitching childhood had yielded but a moment to the enchantment, but had returned again. She was now as ever, a laughing and attractive girl, breathing all the grace and beauty, combined with innocence and unrestraint, which open air and life in the country impart.

Rising, she gathered her red lips into a rosebud, and imitated with an enchanting grace the sweet cooings of the *jurity*, immediately the dove flew from the branches of the acacia, and nestled in her bosom, trembling with pleasure at the touch of the little hand that smoothed its soft plumage.

“Let’s go to bed,” said she to the dove, with the tenderness of a mother talking to her babe; “the little dove is sleepy, is n’t it?” And leaving her cousin for a moment alone in the garden, she went to take care for the night of the two companions of her solitude with so much affection and solicitude that the wealth of feeling existing in the depths of her heart, hid in the infantile charm of her disposition, was clearly revealed.

Soon the tread of animals near the house was heard; Isabel looked toward the river, and saw a troop of horsemen entering the enclosure. She uttered a cry of surprise, joy, and fear at the same time.

“What is it?” asked Cecília, running to her cousin.

“They have arrived?”

“Who?”

“Senhor Álvaro and the others.”

“Ah!” exclaimed the girl blushing.

“Do you not think they have returned very quickly?” asked Isabel, without noticing her cousin’s agitation.

“Very; who knows but something has happened!”

“Only nineteen days!” said Isabel mechanically.

“Have you counted the days?”

“It is easy,” replied she, blushing in her turn; “day after tomorrow it will be three weeks.”

“Let’s go and see what pretty things they bring us.”

“Bring *us*?” repeated Isabel, emphasizing the word with a tone of melancholy.

“Bring *us*, yes; for I ordered a string of pearls for you. Pearls ought to become you. Do you know that I enjoy your dark complexion, cousin?”

“And I would give my life to have your fair skin, Cecília.”

“O, the sun is almost setting! Let us go.”

And the two girls passed through the house toward the entrance.

VI. THE RETURN.

WHILE this scene was taking place in the garden, two men were walking on the other side of the esplanade in the shade of the building.

One of them, of tall stature, was recognized immediately as a nobleman by his proud air and his dress of a cavalier. He wore a black velvet doublet, with loops of coffee-colored silk on the breast and the openings of the sleeves; breeches of the same stuff, likewise black, fell over his long boots of white leather, with golden spurs. A ruffled collar of the whitest linen bordered his doublet, and left uncovered his neck, which sustained with grace his

handsome and noble head. From his dark felt hat, without plume, his white locks escaped, and fell upon his shoulders; through his long beard, white as the foam of the cascade, shone his rosy cheeks and his still expressive mouth. His eyes were small but piercing. This was Dom Antônio de Mariz, who, in spite of his sixty years, showed a vigor due perhaps to his active life; his body was still erect, and his step firm and secure as in the strength of youth.

Walking by his side with his hat in his hand was Ayres Gomes, his esquire and former comrade in his life as an adventurer: the nobleman placed the greatest confidence in his zeal and discretion. This man's face, whether from the restless sagacity which was its ordinary expression, or from his elongated features, bore a certain resemblance to that of a fox, a resemblance enhanced by his odd dress. He wore over his doublet of deep chestnut-colored velveteen a sort of waistcoat of fox skin, and the long boots that served him almost for breeches were of the same material.

"Although you deny it, Ayres Gomes," said the nobleman to his esquire, slowly pacing the esplanade, "I am certain that you are of my opinion."

"I by no means assert the contrary, cavalier; I confess that Dom Diogo committed an imprudence in killing that Indian woman."

"Say a barbarity, a madness. Do not think that because he is my son I exculpate him."

"You judge with too much severity."

"And I ought to, for a nobleman who kills a weak and inoffensive creature does a mean and unworthy act. Accompanying me for thirty years, you know how I treat my enemies; but my sword, which has struck down so many men in war, would fall from my hand if, in a moment of insanity, I should raise it against a woman."

"But we should consider what this woman was, - a savage -"

"I know what you would say; I do not share those ideas that prevail among my companions: For me the Indians, when they attack us, are enemies whom we must fight; when they respect us they are vassals of a land that we have conquered; but they are men."

"Your son does not think so, and you know well what principles Dona Lauriana has instilled into him."

"My wife?" replied the nobleman, with some sharpness. "But it is not of this that we were speaking."

"True; you were mentioning the alarm that Dom Diogo's imprudence caused you."

"And what do you think?"

"I have already told you that I do not see things so black as you do, Dom Antônio. The Indians respect you, fear you, and will not dare to attack you."

“I tell you that you are deceiving yourself, or, rather, that you are seeking to deceive me.”

“I am not capable of such a thing, cavalier!”

“You understand as well as I, Ayres, the character of these savages; you know that their dominant passion is revenge, and that for it they sacrifice everything - their life and their liberty.”

“I am not ignorant of this,” answered the esquire.

“They fear me, you say; but from the moment when they think they have been injured by me they will suffer everything to avenge themselves.”

“You have more experience than I, cavalier; but God grant that you may prove to be mistaken.”

Turning at the edge of the esplanade to continue their walk, Dom Antônio and his esquire saw a young cavalier crossing in front of the house.

“Leave me,” said the nobleman to Ayres Gomes, “and think on what I have said: in any event, let us be prepared to receive them.”

“If they come!” retorted the obstinate esquire, as he was going away.

Dom Antônio proceeded slowly toward the young nobleman, who had taken a seat some steps distant.

Seeing his father approaching, Dom Diogo de Mariz rose, and uncovering himself, waited in a respectful attitude.

“Cavalier,” said the old man sternly, “you infringed yesterday the orders that I gave you.”

“Sir -”

“In spite of my express directions you have injured one of these savages, and brought down upon us their vengeance; you have put in jeopardy the lives of your father, your mother, and our devoted men. You ought to be satisfied with your work.”

“Father -”

“You have done an evil act in assassinating a woman, an act unworthy of the name I gave you; this shows that you do not yet know how to use the sword you wear in your belt.”

“I do not deserve this wrong, sir. Punish me, but do not degrade your son.”

“It is not your father that degrades you, cavalier, but the act that you have perpetrated. I do not wish to humiliate you by taking away that weapon which I gave you to wield in the cause of your king; but as you do not yet know how to use it, I forbid you to take it from its scabbard, even to defend your life.”

Dom Diogo bowed in token of obedience.

“You will start soon, immediately upon the arrival of the expedition from Rio de Janeiro, and will go and seek service with Diogo Botelho in his explorations. You are a Portuguese, and must maintain fidelity to your legitimate king, but you will fight like a nobleman and a Christian for the advancement of religion, conquering from the heathen this country, which will one day return to the dominion of free Portugal.”

“I will obey your orders, father.”

“Until then,” continued the aged nobleman, “you will not stir from this house without my order. Go, cavalier; remember that I am sixty years old, and that your mother and sister will soon need a valiant arm to defend them, and a wise counsellor to protect them.”

The young man felt the tears start in his eyes, but did not utter a word; he bowed, and kissed his father’s hand respectfully.

Dom Antônio, after looking at him a moment with a severity under which appeared signs of a father’s love, turned, and was about to continue his walk, when his wife appeared on the threshold.

Dona Lauriana was a lady of fifty-five; thin, but robust, and well preserved like her husband; she still had black hair, interspersed with some threads of white, which were concealed by her lofty headdress, crowned by one of those ancient combs so large as to encircle her head like a diadem. Her smoke-colored dress, long-waisted and a little short in front, had a respectable train, which she swept with a certain noble grace, relic of her beauty long since departed. Long, gold ear-rings, with emerald pendants that almost grazed her shoulders, and a collar with a golden cross around her neck, were her only ornaments.

In character, she was a combination of pride and devotion; the spirit of nobility, which in Dom Antônio served to set off his other qualities, in her became a ridiculous exaggeration. In the wilderness in which she was placed, instead of seeking to diminish the social distinction that existed between her and the people among whom she lived; she, on the contrary, took advantage of the fact that she was the only noble lady in that place, to crush those around her with her superiority, and to reign from the elevation of her high-backed chair, which for her was almost a throne. In religion it was the same, and one of the greatest griefs of her life was not to see herself surrounded by all those paraphernalia of worship which Dom Antônio, like a man of robust faith and sound judgment, had known how to dispense with perfectly.

In spite of this difference in character, Dom Antônio, either by concession or sternness, lived in perfect harmony with his wife. He sought to satisfy her in everything, but when that was impossible, expressed his will in such a manner that the lady knew at once it was useless to insist. Only at one point had his firmness been baffled; he had not been able to overcome the repugnance that Dona Lauriana had for his niece; but as the aged nobleman felt, perhaps, some twinges of conscience in this regard, he left his wife free to do as she pleased, and respected her feelings.

“You were speaking too severely to Dom Diogo!” said Dona Lauriana, descending to meet her husband.

“I gave him an order and a punishment which he deserved,” replied the nobleman.

“You always treat your son with excessive rigor, Dom Antônio!”

“And you with extreme indulgence, Dona Lauriana. Therefore, as I do not want your love to ruin him, I find myself obliged to deprive you of his company.”

“Mercy! What do you say, Dom Antônio?”

“Dom Diogo will start, in a few days, for the city of Salvador[8], where he will live like a nobleman, serving the cause of religion, and not wasting his time in wild conduct.”

“You will not do this, Senhor Mariz!” exclaimed his wife. “Banish your son from his father’s house!”

“Who spoke of banishment, Madam? Do you want Dom Diogo to pass his whole life tied to your apron-string?”

“But, sir, I am his mother, and I cannot live away from my son, full of anxiety for his lot.”

“Nevertheless it must be so, for I have decided it.”

“You are cruel, sir.”

“I am only just.”

It was at this point that the tread of animals was heard, and Isabel saw the troop of horsemen approaching the house.

“O, here is Álvaro de Sá!” cried Dom Antônio.

The young man with whom we are already acquainted, the Italian, and their companions dismounted, ascended the declivity leading to the esplanade, and approached the cavalier and his wife, whom they saluted respectfully. The aged nobleman extended his hand to Álvaro, and answered the salutation of the others with a certain amiability. As

for Dona Lauriana, the inclination of her head was so imperceptible that she scarcely saw the faces of the adventurers.

After the exchange of these salutations, the nobleman made a sign to Álvaro, and the to stepped aside to converse in a corner of the esplanade, seating themselves on two large trunks of trees rudely wrought, which served as benches. Dom Antônio wished to learn the news from Rio de Janeiro and Portugal, where all hope had been lost of a restoration, which only took place forty years afterward, when the Duke of Bragança was proclaimed king.

The rest of the adventurers proceeded to the other side of the esplanade, and mingled with their comrades who came out to meet them. There they were received by a volley of questions, laughter and jests, in which they took part; afterward, some desirous of news, others eager to relate what they had seen. they began to talk all at once, so that no one could be understood.

At that moment the two girls appeared at the door; Isabel stopped trembling and confused; Cecília descending the steps lightly, ran to her mother. While she was crossing the space that separated her from Dona Lauriana, Álvaro, having obtained permission from the nobleman, advanced, and with hat in hand bowed blushingly before the maiden.

“Here you are back again, Senhor Álvaro!” said Cecília somewhat abruptly, to conceal the embarrassment which she also felt. “You have returned quickly.”

“Less so than I wished,” replied the young man stammeringly; “when the thought remains, the body hastens to return.”

Cecília blushed and fled to her mother. While this brief scene was taking place on the esplanade, three very dissimilar looks were accompanying it, starting from different points and meeting on those two heads, which shone with youth and beauty. Dom Antônio, seated not far off, contemplated the handsome pair, and a heartfelt smile of happiness expanded his venerable face. At a distance, Loredano, a little withdrawn from the groups of his companions, fastened upon the young couple an ardent, hard, incisive look, while his dilated nostrils inhaled the air with the delight of a beast scenting its prey. Isabel, poor child, fixed upon Álvaro her large black eyes, full of bitterness and sadness; her soul seemed to escape in that luminous ray and bow at the young man’s feet. Not one of the mute witnesses of this scene perceived what was passing beyond the point where their looks converged, except that the Italian saw Dom Antônio’s smile, and understood it.

Meantime Dom Diogo, who had withdrawn, returned to greet Álvaro and his companions. The young man had still on his countenance the expression of sadness that his father’s severe words had left.

VII. THE PRAYER.

NIGHT was at hand. The sun was setting behind the great forests which he illumined with his last rays. The soft, dim light of sunset, gliding over the green carpet, rolled like waves gold and purple along the foliage. The wild thorn-trees opened their white and delicate flowers, and the *ouricory*[9] expanded its newest palms to receive in its cup the dew of night. The belated animals sought their lairs; and the *jurity*, calling to its mate, uttered the soft and mournful cooings with which it takes leave of day. A concert of deep notes hailed the setting sun and mingled with the noise of the waterfall, which seemed to break the harshness of its descent and yield to the sweet influence of the evening.

It was the Ave Maria. How grave and solemn in the midst of our forest is the mysterious hour of twilight, when nature kneels at the feet of the Creator to murmur the evening prayer! Those great shadows from the trees stretching along the ground; those infinite graduations of light in the mountain ravines; those chance rays that escaping through the network of leaves play for a moment upon the sand; all these breathe a boundless poetry that fills the soul. The *urutáo*[10] in the depth of the forest utters its deep and sonorous notes, which, echoing through the long archways of verdure, sound in the distance like the slow and measured tones of the angelus. The breeze, moving the tops of the trees, brings a feeble murmur, which seems the final echo of the voices of day and the last of the sign of the dying evening. All those on the esplanade felt more or less the powerful impression of that solemn hour, and yielded involuntarily to a vague sentiment, not indeed of sadness, but of awe. Suddenly the melancholy tones of a clarion were borne through the air, interrupting the evening concert. It was one of the adventurers playing the Ave Maria. All uncovered. Dom Antônio, advancing to the edge of the esplanade toward the west, took off his hat and knelt down. Around him grouped his wife, the two girls, Álvaro, and Dom Diogo; the adventurers, forming a great arc of a circle, knelt some steps distant. The sun with his last reflection lighted up the beard and white hair of the aged nobleman, and heightened the beauty of that bust of an ancient cavalier.

It was a scene at once simple and majestic that was presented by that half Christian, half savage prayer. In all those countenances, illumined by the sunset rays, was reverence. Loredano alone maintained his disdainful smile, and followed with the same malignant look the least movement on the part of Álvaro, who was kneeling near Cecília, absorbed in contemplating her as if she were the divinity to whom he was addressing his prayer.

During the moment when the king of light, suspended on the horizon, was casting his last glance on the earth, all surrendered themselves to a deep meditation and said a mute prayer, which scarcely moved their lips. Finally the sun went down. Ayres Gomes extended his musket over the precipice and a shot saluted its setting. It was night. All rose; the adventurers took their leave, and one by one retired.

Cecília offered her forehead to her father and mother for a kiss, and made a graceful courtesy to her brother and Álvaro. Isabel touched with her lips her uncle's hand, and bent before Dona Lauriana to receive a blessing given

with the dignity and haughtiness of an abbot. Then the family, going toward the door, prepared to enjoy one of those short evening conversations that used to precede the simple but nutritious supper.

Álvaro, in consideration of its being the first day of his arrival, had been summoned by the nobleman to join in this family collation, which he regarded as an extraordinary favor. The great value that he attached to so simple an invitation was explained by the domestic regulations that Dona Lauriana had established in her house. The adventurers and their chiefs lived on one side of the house, entirely separated from the family; during the day they were in the woods, occupied in hunting, or in various operations of rope-making and joinery. It was only at the hour of prayer that they assembled for a moment on the esplanade, where, when the weather was good, the ladies also came to make their evening devotions. As to the family, it always kept retired within the house during the week; Sunday was consecrated to repose, diversion, and gayety; then sometimes occurred an extraordinary event, such as a walk, a hunt, or a canoe trip on the river.

The reason then is apparent why Álvaro had such a desire, as the Italian said, to reach the Paquequer on Saturday and before six o'clock; the young man was dreaming of the happiness of those brief moments of contemplation, and of the liberty of Sunday, which would perhaps offer him an opportunity to venture a word.

The family group being formed, the conversation was carried on between Dom Antônio, Álvaro, and Dona Lauriana; Diogo had remained a little aside; the girls modestly listened, and hardly ever ventured to say a word, unless they were directly spoken to, which rarely occurred. Álvaro, desirous of hearing Cecília's sweet and silvery voice, for which he had longed all through his absence, sought a pretext to draw her into the conversation.

"I forgot to tell you, Dom Antônio," said he, taking advantage of a pause, "an incident of our trip."

"What was it? let us hear," replied the nobleman.

"Some four leagues from here, we found Pery."

"Good!" said Cecília; "we have n't heard anything of him for two days."

"Nothing simpler," replied the noble man; "he is running up and down the forest here."

"Yes," returned Álvaro, "but the way in which we found him will not appear so simple to you."

"Well, what was he doing?"

"Playing with an ounce as you with your fawn, Dona Cecília."

"Goodness!" exclaimed the girl with a shriek.

"What is the matter, my child?" asked Dona Lauriana.

“Why, he must be dead by this time, mother.”

“No great loss,” responded the lady.

“But I shall be the cause of his death.”

“How so, my daughter,” said Dom Antônio.

“You see, father,” answered Cecília, wiping away the tears that came to her eyes, “I was talking Thursday with Isabel, who is very much afraid of ounces, and in jest I told her that I should like to see one alive -”

“And Pery went to get one to gratify your desire,” replied the nobleman laughing. “There is nothing strange about it; he has done the like before.”

“But, father, can such a thing be done? The ounce must have killed him.”

“Have no fears, Dona Cecília; he will know how to defend himself.”

“But why did you not help him, Senhor Álvaro, to defend himself?” said the girl sorrowfully.

“If you had only seen how angry he was because we were going to shoot the animal!” And the young man related part of the scene.

“No doubt,” said Dom Antônio, “in his blind devotion to Cecília he sought to gratify her wish at the risk of his life. To me one of the most admirable things that I have seen in this country is the character of this Indian. From the first day that he entered here, after rescuing my daughter, his life has been a single act of self-denial and heroism. Believe me, Álvaro, he is a Portuguese cavalier in the body of a savage.”

The conversation continued, but Cecília had become sad and took no further part in it. Dona Lauriana retired to give her orders; the aged nobleman and the young man conversed till eight o’clock, when the sound of a bell in the courtyard announced the hour of supper.

While the others were ascending the doorsteps and entering the house, Álvaro found an opportunity of exchanging a few words with Cecília.

“Are you not going to ask me for what you ordered, Dona Cecília?” said he in a low tone.

“O, yes! Have you brought all the things that I asked you to?”

“All and more -” said the young man, stammering.

“And what more?” asked Cecília.

“And one thing more that you did not ask.”

“I do not want it!” replied the girl with some annoyance.

“Not even if it belongs to you already?” answered he timidly.

“I do not understand. It is something that belongs to me already, do you say?”

“Yes; for it is a keepsake for you.”

“In that case keep it, Senhor Álvaro,” said she smiling, “and keep it carefully.”

And escaping, she went to her father, who was approaching the balcony, and in his presence received from Álvaro a small box, which the young man had directed to be brought, and which contained her orders, - jewellery, silks, edgings, ribbons, galloons, hollands, and a handsome pair of pistols skillfully inlaid.

Seeing these weapons, the girl uttered a suppressed sigh and murmured to herself: “My poor Pery! Perhaps they will no longer avail you, even to defend yourself.”

The supper was long and leisurely, as was the custom in those times, when eating was a serious occupation and the table an altar that was respected.

As soon as her father rose, Cecília retired to her room, and kneeling before the crucifix said her prayers. Then, rising, she raised a corner of the window curtain, and looked at the cabin that stood on the summit of the rock, deserted and solitary. She felt her heart oppressed with the idea that by a jest she had been the cause of the death of that devoted friend who had saved her life, and every day risked his own merely to make her smile.

Everything in that apartment spoke of him: her birds, her two little friends, sleeping, one in its nest and the other on the carpet, the feathers that ornamented her chamber, the skins of animals beneath her feet; the sweet perfume of benzoin that she breathed, all had come from the Indian who, like a poet or an artist seemed to create around her a little temple of the masterpieces of Brazilian nature.

She remained thus looking out of the window for some time; all the while she had no thought of Álvaro, the elegant young cavalier, so gentle, so timid, who blushed in her presence as she in his.

Suddenly she started. She had seen by the starlight a figure pass which she recognized by the whiteness of its cotton tunic and by its slender and flexible form. When it entered into the cabin she no longer had the least doubt. It was Pery.

She felt relieved of a great weight, and could then give herself up to the pleasure of examining one by one, with the greatest care, the pretty things she had received, which afforded her a keen enjoyment. In this way she spent

certainly half an hour; then she went to bed, and as she no longer had any inquietude or sadness, she fell asleep smiling at the image of Álvaro, and thinking of the grief she had caused him by refusing his gift.

VIII. THREE LINES.

ALL was still; the only sound, heard when the wind lulled, was a noise of subdued voices from the side of the building occupied by the adventurers.

At that hour there were in that place three men very different in character, in position, and in origin, who nevertheless were controlled by the same idea. Separated by manners and by distance, their minds broke that moral and physical barrier, and united in a single thought, converging to the same point like the radii of a circle.

Let us follow each of the lines traced by those existences, which sooner or later must intersect.

In one of the porches that ran in the rear of the house thirty-six adventurers were seated around a long table, on which in wooden porringers some pieces of game were smoking, already disposed of in a manner that did honor to the appetite of the guests. The Catalan did not run so freely in the earthen and metal jugs as was to be desired, but by way of compensation large jars of cashew-nut and pineapple wine were seen in the corners of the porch, from which the adventurers could drink their fill. The meal had lasted half an hour: at first only the grating of the teeth, the smacking of the jugs, and the ringing of the knives in the porringers were heard. Then one of the adventurers made a remark which immediately ran around the table, and the conversation became a confused and discordant chorus.

It was in the midst of this hubbub that one of the guests, raising his voice, uttered these words:

“And you, Loredano, have n’t you anything to say? You sit there mute, and we can’t get a word out of you!”

“Certainly,” chimed in another, “Bento Simões is right; if it is not hunger that makes you silent, something is the matter with you, Sir Italian.”

“I wager, Martin Vaz,” said a third, “that it is grief for some girl that he courted in São Sebastião.”

“Away with your griefs, Ruy Soeiro; do you think Loredano is a man to be troubled by things of that sort?”

“And why not, Vasco Affonso? We all wear the same shoe, though it pinches some more than others.”

“Do not judge others by yourself, Sir Lover; there are men who employ their thought on things of more value than love and gallantries.”

The Italian remained silent, and let the others talk without taking any notice of them. It was plain that he was following out an idea that was at work in his mind.

“But, in faith,” continued Bento Simões, “tell us what you saw on your journey, Loredano; I wager something happened to you.”

“Listen to what I tell you,” interrupted Ruy Soeiro; “My Lord Italian is in love.”

“And with whom, if you please?” asked several.

“O, there’s no difficulty in seeing: with that jug of wine there before him; do you not see what looks he gives it?”

The adventurers burst into a loud laugh, applauding the joke.

Ayres Gomes appeared at the door of the porch.

“Come, boys!” said he, in a tone that he tried to make severe, “stop your noise!”

“It is an arrival, esquire, and you ought to take that into account,” said Ruy Soeiro.

Ayres sat down, and began to do the honors to a remnant of venison in front of him. “You there,” cried he, with his mouth full, to two adventurers who had risen, “go and stand watch, now that you are refreshed, and the rest will be ready for their turn.”

The two adventurers went out to relieve those on duty, for it was the custom to stand sentry at night; a necessary measure at that time.

“You are very strict today, Senhor Ayres Gomes,” said Martin Vaz.

“He who gives the orders knows what he is doing; it is for us to obey,” replied the esquire.

“Ah! why did n’t you say that at once?”

“Well, you will understand now. A vigilant watch, for perhaps we shall shortly have something to do.”

“Let it come,” said Bento Simões, “for I am tired of shooting the guinea pigs and wild hogs.”

“And in honor of whom do you think we shall shortly burn some pounds of powder?” asked Vasco Affonso.

“Can there be any question? Who but the Indians can afford us this amusement?”

Loredano raised his head. “What sort of a story are you telling there? Do you suppose the Indians will attack us?” asked he.

“O, here is My Lord Italian waking up; it was necessary for him to smell powder,” exclaimed Martin Vaz.

The presence of Ayres Gomes checking the free hilarity of the adventurers, caused them one after another to forsake the table, and leave the esquire alone with the jugs and porringers. Loredano, rising, made a sign to Ruy Soeiro and Bento Simões, and the three went together to the center of the yard. The Italian murmured in their ears a single word, “Tomorrow!” Then as if nothing had passed between them, the two adventurers went each his own way, and left Loredano to continue his walk to the brink of the precipice.

On the opposite side the Italian saw dimly reflected on the trees the light from Cecília’s room, the windows of which he could not distinguish, because of the angle formed by the esplanade. There he waited.

Álvaro, upon leaving Cecília, had come away sad and hurt at her refusal, although her last word, and above all the smile that accompanied it, consoled him. He could not reconcile himself to the loss of the great pleasure on which he had counted, of seeing among the maiden’s ornaments some favor from himself, some memento to tell him that she thought of him. He had cherished this idea so much, had lived so long upon it, that to tear it from his mind would be torture.

While on his way to his room, he formed a project and made a resolution. He put in a small silken purse a little box of jewels, and wrapping himself in his mantle proceeded along the side of the house, and approached the little garden in front of Cecília’s room. He also saw the light reflected opposite, and waited till the night should advance and the whole house should be wrapped in sleep.

In the meantime Pery, the Indian, had arrived with his burden, so precious that he would not exchange it for a treasure. He left his prisoner in the enclosure on the river bank, secured to a tree. He then ascended to the esplanade, and it was at this time that the girl saw him enter his cabin. What, however, she could not perceive was the manner in which he left almost immediately. Two days had passed since he had seen his mistress, received an order from her, or anticipated a desire. The first thought of the Indian then was to see Cecília, or at least her shadow. Entering his cabin he saw, like the others, the glimmer of light that escaped through the window curtains.

He suspended himself to one of the palm trees that served as supports to the hut, and by one of those agile movements that were so natural to him, at a single bound reached the branch of a gigantic *oleo*, which, rising on the slope opposite, threw out some limbs on the side toward the house. For a moment the Indian hung over the abyss, swinging on the frail branch that supported him; then he regained his equilibrium, and continued his aerial journey with the security and firmness with which an old sailor walks tile maintop and climbs the shrouds. He reached the other side of the tree, and, concealed in the foliage, gained a branch opposite Cecília’s windows, and about two yards from them. It was at this moment that Loredano arrived on one side, and Álvaro on the other, and stationed themselves alike at a little distance.

At first Pery had eyes only to see what was passing in the room; Cecília was still examining the articles she had received from Rio de Janeiro. In this silent gaze the Indian forgot everything; what mattered to him the precipice that opened at his feet to swallow him at the least movement, and over which he was suspended by a frail branch, which bent and might break at any moment? He was happy: he had seen his mistress; she was joyous, pleased, satisfied; he could now seek sleep and repose.

A sad reflection, however, assailed him; seeing the pretty things the maiden had received, he thought that he might save her life, but that he had no such beautiful things as those to offer her. The poor savage raised his eyes to heaven with a look of despair, as if to see whether, placed a hundred and fifty feet above the earth, on the top of the tree, he could not stretch out his hand and gather the stars, and lay them at Cecília's feet.

This, then, was the point at which those three lines, starting from such different sources, intersected. As they were situated, the three men formed a literal triangle, whose center was the dimly lighted window. They were all risking, or were going to risk their lives, merely to touch the lattice, and yet not one of them weighed the danger that he was to incur; not one of them valued his life in comparison with so great a pleasure.

Passions in a wilderness, and above all in the bosom of a grand and majestic nature like this, are true epics of the heart.

IX. LOVE.

THE window curtains closed; Cecília had gone to bed.

Near the innocent girl, asleep in the freedom of her pure and virgin soul, were watching three deep passions, were palpitating three very unlike hearts.

In Loredano, the adventurer of low extraction, this passion was an ardent desire, a thirst for enjoyment, a fever that burned his blood: moreover, the brutal instinct of his vigorous nature was heightened by the moral impossibility that his condition created; by the barrier that rose between him, a poor colonist, and the daughter of Dom Antônio de Mariz, a rich nobleman of rank and fame. To break down this barrier and equalize their positions, some extraordinary occurrence would be necessary; some event that should change completely the laws of society, at that time more rigid than today: there was demanded one of those situations in presence of which individuals, whatever their rank, noble or pariah, are leveled, and descend or ascend to the condition of men. The adventurer knew this perhaps his Italian penetration bad already sounded the depth of that idea. At all events he hoped, and hoping watched his treasure with a zeal and constancy equal to every trial. The twenty days he had passed in Rio de Janeiro had been a real torment.

In Álvaro, a courteous and refined cavalier, the passion was a pure and noble affection, full of the pleasing timidity that perfumes the first flowers of the heart, and of the knightly enthusiasm that lent so much poetry to the loves of that time of faith and loyalty. To feel himself near Cecília, to see her and exchange a word, stammered with difficulty, both blushing without knowing why, and avoiding each other while desiring to meet, this was the whole history of that innocent affection which surrendered itself carelessly to the future, balancing on the wings of hope. Tonight Álvaro was about to take a step which in his habitual timidity he compared almost to a formal request of marriage; he had resolved to make the maiden accept in spite of herself the gift she had refused, by laying it on her window; he hoped that when she found it on the following day Cecília would pardon his boldness and keep his present.

In Pery the passion was a worship, a kind of fanatical idolatry, into which entered no thought of self; he loved Cecília, not to feel a pleasure or experience a satisfaction, but to dedicate himself wholly to her, to fulfill her slightest desire, to anticipate her very thoughts. Unlike the others, he was not there either from a restless jealousy or a ridiculous hope; he braved death solely to see whether Cecília was contented, happy, and joyous; whether she did not desire something that he could read on her countenance, and go in search of that same night, that very instant.

Thus love was so completely transformed into those organizations that it assumed three very different forms; one was a madness, the other a passion, the last a religion. Loredano desired; Álvaro loved; Pery adored. The adventurer would give his life to enjoy; the cavalier would brave death to deserve a look; the savage would kill himself, if need were, merely to make Cecília smile.

Meanwhile neither of those three men could touch the girl's window without running an imminent risk, in consequence of the position of Cecília's room. Although this side of the house was only two yards from the precipice, Dom Antônio, for the purpose of fortifying it, had had an inclined plane constructed from the windows to the edge of the esplanade, which it was impossible to ascend, - its smooth and polished face offering no point of contact to the firmest and surest foot. Under the window opened the steep rock, forming a deep palisade, covered by a green canopy of climbing plants and shrubs, which seemed a dwelling-place for all those reptiles that breed in darkness and moisture. Any one precipitated from the top of the esplanade into the broad and deep fissure, if by a miracle he was not dashed in pieces on the points of the rock, would be devoured by the venomous snakes and insects that filled the cavities and the slopes.

Some moments had passed since the window-curtain was closed; only a dim and fading light reflected on the dark-green foliage of the *oleo* the outline of the window. The Italian, who had his eyes fixed upon this reflection as upon a mirror where he saw all the images of his mad passion, suddenly started. In its light a moving shadow was depicted; a man was approaching the window.

Pale, with glowing eyes and clinched teeth, hanging over the precipice, he followed the slightest movements of the shadow. He saw an arm stretched toward the window, and the hand leave on the sill some object so small that its

form was not discerned. By the wide sleeve of the doublet, or rather by instinct, the Italian divined that this arm belonged to Álvaro, and comprehended what the hand had laid in the window.

And he was not mistaken. Álvaro, steadying himself by one of the posts of the garden-fence, placed one foot on he inclined plane, pressed his body against the wall, and leaning forward succeeded in accomplishing his purpose. Then he returned, divided between fear at what he had done and hope that Cecília would pardon him.

No Sooner did Loredano see the shadow disappear and hear the echoes of the young man's footsteps, than he smiled, and his eyes shone in the darkness like those of a wildcat. He drew his dagger and buried it in the wall, as far around the corner as his arm would reach. Then supporting himself by this frail prop, he was able to climb the inclined plane and approach the window; at the least indecision and the slightest movement it was enough that his foot should fail him, or that the poniard should move in the cement, to precipitate him headlong upon the rocks.

In the meantime, Pery, seated quietly on the branch of the *oleo*, and hidden by the foliage, witnessed without a movement the whole scene. As soon as Cecília closed her window-curtains, the Indian had seen the two men standing on either hand and apparently waiting. He waited also, curious to know what was to occur; but resolved, if it were necessary, to hurl himself at one bound upon the one that should offer the least violence, and to fall with him from the top of the esplanade. He had recognized Álvaro and Loredano; for a long time he had known the cavalier's love for Cecília, but of the Italian he had never had the least suspicion.

What could these two men want? What came they to do there at that silent hour of the night? Álvaro's action explained part of the enigma; Loredano's was about to make plain the rest. For the Italian, who had approached the window, succeeded with an effort in pushing the object that Álvaro had left there off, over the precipice. This done, he returned in the same way, and retired enjoying the pleasure of that simple revenge, - the result of which, however, he foresaw.

Pery did not move. With his natural sagacity he had comprehended the love of the one and the jealousy of the other, and reached a conclusion that for him, with his savage understanding and fanatical adoration, was very simple. If Cecília thought this ought to be so, the rest mattered little to him; but if what he had seen caused her a shade of sadness and dimmed for a moment the lustre of her blue eyes, then it was different. Quieted by this idea he sought his cabin, and slept dreaming that the moon sent him a ray of her white and satiny light to tell him that she was protecting her daughter on earth.

And in reality the moon was rising above the trees, and illuminating the front of the house. Then anyone approaching one of the windows at the end of the garden would have seen in the obscurity of the room a motionless figure. It was Isabel, watching pensively, wiping away from time to time a tear that trickled down her cheek.

She was thinking of her unhappy love, of the solitude of her soul, so bereft of pleasing recollections and bright hopes. All that evening had been a martyrdom to her; she had seen Álvaro talking with Cecília, and had divined almost his very words. Within a few moments she had seen the shadow of the young man crossing the esplanade, and knew that it was not on her account that he passed.

From time to time her lips moved, and some imperceptible words escaped, “If I could make up my mind!”

She took from her bosom a golden phial, under whose crystal lid was seen a lock of hair coiled in the narrow metal ring. What was there in this phial so powerful as to justify that exclamation, and the brilliant look that lighted up Isabel’s black eye? Could it be a secret, one of those terrible secrets that suddenly change the face of things, and make the past rise up to crush the present? Could it be some inestimable and fabulous treasure, whose seduction human nature had not power to resist? Could it be some weapon against which there was no possible defense except in a miracle of Providence? It was the fine dust of the *curari*, the terrible poison of the savages.

Isabel pressed her lips upon the crystal with a sort of frenzy. “My mother! My mother!” A sob burst from her breast.

X. AT DAWN.

ON the following morning, at break of day, Cecília opened the little garden gate and approached the wall. “Pery!” said she.

The Indian appeared at the entrance of his cabin, and ran joyfully, but timidly and submissively.

Cecília sat down on a mound of grass, and with much difficulty assumed an air of severity, which from time to time was almost betrayed by an obstinate smile that sought to escape from her lips. She fixed upon the Indian for a moment her large blue eyes in gentle reproof, and then said in a tone more of complaint than of sternness: “I am very angry with Pery!”

His countenance became clouded. “You, mistress, angry with Pery? Why?”

“Because Pery is bad and ungrateful; instead of remaining near his mistress, he goes off hunting, imperiling his life,” said the girl, exhibiting displeasure.

“Cecy wished to see an ounce alive.”

“Can I not joke, then? Is it enough for me to desire a thing, to set you running after it like a mad man?”

“When Cecy thinks a flower beautiful, shall not Pery go and get it?” asked the Indian.

“Certainly.”

“When Cecy hears the *soffrer*[11] sing, shall not Pery catch it?”

“What of that?”

“Since Cecy wished to see an ounce, Pery went to get one.”

Cecília could not repress a smile at hearing this rude syllogism, to which the simple and concise language of the Indian gave a certain poetry and originality. But she was resolved to maintain her severity, and to scold Pery for the anxiety he had caused her the evening before.

“That is no reason,” said she. “Is a savage beast the same thing as a bird, and can you gather it like a flower?”

“Everything is the same that causes you pleasure, mistress.”

“But then,” exclaimed the girl, with a sign of impatience, “if I should ask you for that cloud?” And she pointed to the white vapors that were passing over, still enveloped in the pale shades of night.

“Pery would go and get it.”

“"The cloud?” asked she with astonment.

“Yes, the cloud.”

Cecília thought that the Indian was out of his head. He continued -

“Only, as the cloud is not of earth, and man cannot reach it, Pery would die, and ask the Lord of the sky for the cloud to give to Cecy.” These words were spoken with the simplicity that marks the language of the heart.

The girl’s feigned severity could no longer resist, and suffered a divine smile to play upon her lips. “Thank you, my good Pery! You are a devoted friend. But I do not want you to risk your life to satisfy a whim of mine; on the other hand, I wish you to preserve it, that you may defend me as you have already once done.”

“Mistress is no longer angry with Pery?”

“No; although she ought to be, because Pery yesterday made his mistress unhappy, thinking that he was going to die.”

“And was Cecy sad?” exclaimed the Indian.

“Cecy cried,” replied the girl, with a charming frankness.

“Pardon me, mistress!”

“I not only pardon you, but I am going to make you a present also.”

Cecília ran to her room, and brought the rich pair of pistols which she had ordered by Álvaro.

“Look! would n’t Pery like to have a pair like these?”

“Very much.”

“Well, here they are! you will never part with them, will you? because they a memento from Cecília.”

“I will sooner part with life.”

“When you are in any danger, remember that Cecília gave them to you to defend and save your life.”

“Because it is yours, is it not mistress?”

“Yes, because it is mine, and I want you to preserve it for me.”

Pery’s countenance became radiant with a boundless joy, an infinite happiness; he put the pistols in his girdle of feathers, and held his head up, proud as a king who had just received God’s anointing.

For him this maiden, - this fair, blue-eyed angel, - represented divinity on earth: to admire her, to make her smile, to see her happy was his worship; a holy and reverential worship in which his heart poured out treasures of feeling and poetry that overflowed from his virgin nature.

Isabel entered into the garden the poor girl had been awake all night, and her face appeared to still wear traces of those hot tears that scald the bosom and burn the cheeks. The maiden and the Indian did not notice each other; they entertained a mutual hatred; it was an antipathy that had begun with their first meeting and had increased daily.

“Now, Pery, Isabel and I are going to take a bath.”

“May not Pery accompany you, mistress?”

“Yes; but on condition that Pery is very still and quiet.”

The reason why Cecília imposed this condition could be fully understood only by one who had witnessed one of the scenes that used to occur when the two girls took a bath, which happened almost always on Sunday.

Pery, with his bow, his inseparable companion, and a terrible weapon in his skillful hand, would take his seat at a distance on the river bank, on one of the highest points of rock, or on the are branch of some tree, and would not let anyone approach within twenty paces of the place where the girls were bathing.

When an adventurer crossed by chance the circle that the Indian traced around him with his eye, Pery, from his commanding position would discover him at once. Then if the careless hunter felt his hat suddenly ornamented with a red feather that flew hissing through the air; if he saw an arrow snatch from him the fruit he had stretched out his hand to pluck; if he stopped affrighted before a long plumed shaft, which, discharged from above, stuck two paces in front of him, as if to arrest his progress and serve as a limit, he was not astonished. He understood at once what this meant, and from the respect that they all entertained for Dom Antônio and his family, retraced his steps, hurling an oath at Pery, who had pierced his hat, or compelled him to draw back his hand in fright.

And he did well to return, for the Indian with his ardent zeal would not have hesitated to put out his eyes, to prevent him upon reaching the river-bank from seeing the maiden bathing in the waters. Cecília and her cousin were accustomed to bathe in a garment of light woolen stuff, that completely concealed their forms under its dark colors, while leaving their movements free for swimming. But Pery thought that notwithstanding this it would be a profanation that anyone should see his mistress in her bathing dress, even though it were only her slave, who could not injure her that was his only god. While the Indian, by the sureness of his rapid vision and the discharge of his arrows, thus kept this circle impenetrable, he did not cease to regard with scrupulous attention the current and the banks of the river. The fish that kissed the surface of the water and might injure the maiden; an innocent green snake, coiled in the leaves of the water-lilies; a chameleon basking in the sun, its prism of brilliant colors sparkling in the light; a white and shaggy monkey making naughty grimaces, suspended by his tail to the branch of a tree, - everything that might frighten the maiden he drove away if it was distant, and if it was near he transfixed the animal to a tree or to the ground. If a branch borne by the current was passing, if a little grass became detached from the pebbly margin of the river, if the fruit of a *sapucaia*[12] hanging over the Paquequer snapped and fell, the Indian, fleet as the arrow from his bow, sprang and caught the nut in the midst of its fall, or leaped into the water and picked up the floating objects. Cecília might be injured by the tree brought down by the current, by the falling fruit; she might be frightened by the contact of the grass, thinking it a snake; and Pery would not have forgiven himself if the maiden had suffered the slightest discomfort through lack of his care. In short, he extended around her a watchfulness so constant and untiring, a protection so intelligent and delicate, that she might be at ease, certain that if she suffered anything it would be because all power of man had been impotent to prevent it. This then is the reason why Cecília ordered Pery to be still and quiet; she knew, nevertheless, that this order was always vain, and that the Indian would do everything to prevent even a bee from kissing her red lips, mistaking them for a flower of the *pequiá*[13].

When the two girls crossed the esplanade, Álvaro was walking near the steps. Cecília saluted the young cavalier in passing with a smile, and descended lightly, followed by her cousin.

Álvaro, who had sought to read in her eyes and on her countenance the pardon of his last night's rashness, and had found nothing to calm his fear, concluded to follow the maiden and speak with her. He turned to see if any one was there to observe what he was about to do, and found the Italian a few feet distant, looking at him with one of his sarcastic smiles.

"Good morning, cavalier."

The two enemies exchanged looks that crossed like blades of steel.

At that moment Pery approached them slowly, loading one of the pistols that Cecília had given him a few minutes before. The Indian stopped, and with a slight, indefinable smile took the pistols by the barrel, and presented one of them to Álvaro and the other to Loredano.

Both understood the act and the smile, both felt that they had committed an imprudence, and that the sagacity of the savage had read hatred in their eyes and perhaps the cause of that hatred. They turned away, pretending not to have seen the movement.

Pery shrugged his shoulders and putting the pistols in his girdle passed proudly between them, and accompanied his mistress.

XI. AT THE BATH.

WHILE descending the stone steps from the esplanade, Cecília asked her cousin:

"Tell me one thing, Isabel; why do you not speak to Senhor Álvaro?"

Isabel started.

"I have noticed," continued the girl, "that you do not even respond to the bow that he makes to us."

"That he makes to *you*, Cecília," replied the maiden gently.

"Confess that you do not like him. Have you an antipathy against him?"

The girl was silent.

"Will you not speak? Well, then I shall think another thing," continued Cecília jestingly.

Isabel turned pale, and placing her hand on her heart to check its violent pulsations, made a supreme effort, and extorted a few words that seemed to burn her lips. “You know well enough that I detest him!”

Cecília did not see the alteration in her cousin’s countenance, for, having reached the bottom at that moment, she had forgotten the conversation and had begun to play with childish glee upon the grass. But even if she had seen the girl’s confusion, she certainly would have attributed it to every reason but the right one. The affection she had for Álvaro appeared to her so innocent, so natural, that she had never imagined it would sometime pass beyond what it was; that is, a pleasure that brought a smile and a confusion that caused a blush. This love, if it was love, could not know what was passing in Isabel’s soul; could not understand the sublime falsehood her lips had just uttered.

For Isabel, that expression of hatred was almost a blasphemy. But better that than to reveal what was passing in her soul; that mystery, that ignorance, that enshrouded her love and concealed it from all eyes, had for her an inexpressible delight. She could thus gaze hour after hour upon the young man without his perceiving it, without disturbing him perchance with the mute prayer of her supplicating look; she could believe herself mirrored in his soul without exciting a smile of contempt or ridicule.

The sun was rising. The soft and pleasant light of morning was but just lighting up the earth, and surprising the lazy shadows that still slumbered under the trees. It was the hour when the cactus, flower of night, closes its cup full of the dew-drops from which it distils its perfume, fearing lest the sun should scorch the transparent whiteness of its petals.

Cecília, like a playful child, ran about upon the still damp grass, plucking a blue *graciola* swinging to and fro upon its stalk, or a marshmallow just opening its pretty scarlet buds. Everything for her had an inexpressible charm; the tears of night trembling like brilliants on the leaves of the palm trees; the butterfly, its wings still torpid, waiting for the warmth of the sun to reanimate it; the *viuvinha*[14] concealed among the branches, warning its companion that day was breaking, - all this drew from her a cry of surprise and pleasure.

While she was thus playing on the meadow, Pery, who was following her at a distance, stopped suddenly, struck with a thought that sent a cold shudder through his body; he remembered the tiger.

At one bound he disappeared in a large thicket near by; a stifled roar was heard, a great crackling of leaves, and the Indian reappeared. Cecília had turned around a little startled.

“What was that, Pery?”

“Nothing, mistress.”

“Is this the way you promised to keep quiet?”

“Cecy will not be angry any more.”

“What do you mean?”

“Pery knows!” replied the Indian, smiling.

The evening before he had provoked a dreadful struggle to tame and overcome a fierce animal, and lay it submissive and harmless at the maiden’s feet, because he thought this would please her. Now, trembling with fear lest his mistress should suffer, he had destroyed in an instant that act of heroism, without uttering a word to reveal it. It was enough that he knew what he had done.

The girls, who were far from knowing what a pitch Pery’s madness had reached, and who did not think it possible that a man could do what he had done, understood neither the words nor the smile. Cecília had reached a jasmine bower, standing at the water’s edge, which served her as a bathing house. It was one of Pery’s works; he had arranged with the care and attention he habitually bestowed in gratifying her wishes. Then, removing the jasmine branches that wholly concealed the entrance, Cecília stepped into that little pavilion of verdure, and carefully examined the leaves to see whether there was not some aperture through which the eye of day might penetrate. The innocent girl was ashamed to have even a ray of light espy the treasures of beauty concealed beneath her cambric robes. And when her garments revealed her white shoulders and her pure, sweet neck, she almost died of embarrassment and fright, for a malicious little bird, concealed amid the foliage, chirped distinctly: “*Bem-te-vi*, (I saw you well)!”

Cecília smiled at her fear, and adjusted her bathing dress, which covered her completely, leaving bare only her arms and her little foot. She sprang into the water like a little bird; Isabel, who merely came to please her, remained seated on the river bank.

How beautiful was Cecília swimming on the limpid waters of the stream, her fair hair hanging loose, and her white arms curved gracefully to give a gentle motion to her body; like one of those white herons or rose-colored spoon bills that glide slowly over the surface of the lake on calm evenings, mirrored in the crystal waters. Sometimes the pretty girl would lie at length upon the water, and smiling at the blue sky be borne by the current, or would pursue the *jassanans*[15] and wild ducks that fled before her. At others, Pery, who was at a distance above her, plucking some parasitic flower, would place it in a little boat of bark, and send it down the stream. The girl would swim after the boat, secure the flower, and offer it on the tips of her fingers to Isabel, who tearing off its leaves would sadly murmur the cabalistic words with which the heart seeks to deceive itself. But instead of consulting the present she inquired of the future, because she knew that the present held no hope for her, and if the flower said the contrary it was false.

Cecília had been at her bath for half an hour when Pery, seated on a tree and keeping a sharp lookout around him, saw the bushes move on the opposite bank. The undulation extended like a spiral, and approached the place where the girl was bathing, until it stopped behind some large rocks on the river bank.

At the first glance the Indian perceived that it must be produced by an animal of large size.

He moved rapidly along the limbs of the trees, crossed the river upon this aerial bridge, and concealed among the foliage succeeded in placing himself directly over the place where the bushes were still vibrating. He then saw sitting among the shrubs two savages, ill-covered by breeches of yellow feathers, who with bows drawn were waiting for Cecília to pass before the aperture made by the rocks in order to discharge their arrows. And the girl, calm and unsuspecting, had already extended her arm, and striking the water was passing with a smile upon her lips in front of the death that threatened her.

If it had concerned his own life, Pery would have been self-possessed but Cecília was in peril, and therefore he neither reflected nor calculated. He fell like a stone from the top of the tree the two arrows were just then discharged, and one struck him on the shoulder, while the other grazing his hair changed its direction.

He immediately rose, and without even taking the trouble to draw out the arrow, with a single movement took from his girdle the pistols he had received from his mistress, and shot the savages through the head.

Two cries of fear were heard from the opposite bank, and almost at the same moment the trembling and angry voice of Cecília, calling “Pery!”

He kissed the still smoking pistols and was about to answer, when a few feet from him the form of an Indian woman rose from among the bushes, and quickly disappeared in the forest. He cast a glance through the aperture, and thinking Cecília already in a safe place sprang after the woman, who now had a considerable start of him.

A broad red stripe escaping from his wound tinged his white cotton tunic. Pery suddenly became dizzy and grasped his heart despairingly as if to check the flow of blood. It was a moment of terrible struggle between the force of will and the power of nature. His body grew faint, his knees bent, and Pery, raising his arms as if to grasp the overarching trees, and straining his muscles to keep on his feet, struggled in vain with the weakness that was overpowering him.

He contended for a moment against the mighty gravitation that was drawing him to the earth, but he was a man and must yield to the law of nature. Nevertheless, while submitting, the indomitable Indian continued to resist, and when overcome seemed to want to struggle still. He did not fall, - no: when his strength wholly failed him he drew himself back slowly, and only touched the earth with his knees.

But then he remembered Cecília, his mistress whom he must avenge, and for whom he must live, to save and watch over her. He made a supreme effort; drawing himself up he succeeded in rising again, took two dizzy steps, whirled round in the air, and struck against a tree, which he embraced convulsively.

It was a *cabuiba*[116] of great height, rising above the rest of the forest, from whose ashen trunk exuded an opal-colored oil that trickled down in tears. The sweet aroma of these drops made the Indian open his dying eyes, which were lighted up with a bright glow of happiness. He pressed his lips eagerly upon the tree, and sipped the oil, which acted like a powerful balsam in his breast. He began to revive. He rubbed the oil over the wound, stanched the blood, and breathed.

He was saved.

XII. THE OUNCE.

LET us return to the house.

Loredano, after Pery's demonstration, had kept his eyes on Álvaro, who proceeded along the edge of the esplanade to see Cecília on her way to the river.

Scarcely had the young man turned the corner formed by the rock, when the Italian descended the steps rapidly and entered into the forest. A few moments later Ruy Soeiro appeared on the esplanade, descended, and entered in his turn into the forest. Bento Simões imitated him after a little interval, and guided by fresh notches on the trees took the same direction.

About half an hour passed; all the windows had been opened to admit the pure morning air and the wholesome breath from the fields; a slight column of whitish smoke crowned the chimney, announcing that the household labors had begun. Suddenly a cry was heard in the house; all the doors and windows were closed with a din and a quickness as though an enemy had made an attack. Through a half-opened window appeared the face of Dona Lauriana, pale, with her hair unarranged, an extraordinary circumstance.

"Ayres Gomes! The esquire! Call Ayres Gomes! Let him come at once!" shrieked the lady. The window closed again and was bolted.

Gomes did not delay, but crossing the esplanade went to the house. "Did you call me?" said he, approaching the window.

"Yes; are you armed?" asked Dona Lauriana from behind the door.

“I have my sword; but what news is there?”

The agitated countenance of Dona Lauriana appeared again at the window. “The ounce, Ayres Gomes! The ounce!”

The esquire gave a prodigious leap, thinking that the animal was springing at his throat, and drawing his sword placed himself on guard. The lady, seeing the movement of the esquire, supposed that the ounce was leaping into the window, and fell upon her knees murmuring a prayer to the saint that protects against wild beasts.

Some minutes passed thus; Dona Lauriana praying, and Ayres Gomes turning round in the yard like a top, fearing lest the ounce should attack him from behind, which besides being a disgrace for a man of arms of his temper would be disagreeable to his health. Finally he succeeded in gaining the wall of the house again, and placed his back against it, which completely tranquillized him.

In front of him there was no enemy to make him blink. Then striking with his sword-blade on the side of the window, he said in a loud voice: “Be good enough to tell me what ounce that is of which you speak, Dona Lauriana; either I am blind, or I do not see the shadow of such an animal here.”

“Are you sure of this, Ayres Gomes?” said the lady, rising again.

“Am I sure of it? Satisfy yourself with your own eyes.”

“True! but there must be one somewhere!”

“And why in the world will you have it that there is an ounce here, Dona Lauriana?” said the esquire somewhat out of patience.

“Then you don't know!” exclaimed the lady.

“What, madam?”

“Did not that demon of an Indian take it into his head to bring home a live ounce yesterday?”

“Who, the dog of a cazique?”

“And who but that scurvy cur! It’s one of his old tricks! Was ever such a thing known, Ayres Gomes? I want to see if Senhor Mariz will still persist in keeping this fine jewel.”

“And what has become of the ounce, Dona Lauriana?”

“It must be somewhere. Hunt for it, Ayres; look everywhere, kill it, and bring it here to me.”

“No sooner said than done,” replied the esquire, running as fast as his foxskin boots permitted.

With little delay about twenty armed adventurers descended from the esplanade. Ayres Gomes marched at their head with an enormous pike, his sword in hand, and a knife in his teeth.

After scouring almost the whole valley and beating the grove, they were returning, when the esquire stopped suddenly and cried: “There it is, boys! Fire before it makes its leap!”

In fact, through the branches of the trees was seen the black and variegated skin of the tiger, and its cat-like eyes gleaming with a pale reflection.

The adventurers raised their muskets to the face, hut just as they were going to pull the trigger, they all burst into a loud laugh, and lowered their weapons.

“What does this mean? Are you afraid?” And the fearless esquire, without troubling himself about the others, plunged among the trees, and presented himself proudly before the tiger. There, however, his jaw fell with astonishment.

The ounce was swinging lifeless on a branch, to which it was suspended by its neck, with a noose. While it was alive a single man had sufficed to bring it from the Parahyba to the forest where it had been caught, and from the forest to that place where it had died. It was after death that it made all that uproar; that it put in arms twenty valiant men, and produced a revolution in Dona Lauriana’s house.

After the first moment of astonishment, Ayres Gomes cut the cord, and dragging the animal along, presented it to the lady. After they had assured her from without that the tiger was certainly dead, the door partly opened, and Dona Lauriana, still quaking with fear, looked tremblingly upon the body of the wild beast.

“Leave it right there. Dom Antônio shall see it with his own eyes!” It was the *corpus delicti* upon which she intended to base the accusation she was going to bring against Pery.

At various times the lady had sought to persuade her husband to banish the Indian, whom she could not endure and whose presence was enough to throw her into hysterics. But all her efforts had been vain the nobleman, with his loyalty and knightly spirit, appreciated Pery’s character, and saw in him, though a savage, a man of noble sentiments and lofty soul. As a father he valued the Indian from the circumstance, which will he explained further on, that he had saved his daughter’s life.

This time, however, Dona Lauriana hoped to succeed, and considered it impossible that her husband should not severely punish the crime of going into the forest to catch an ounce and bringing it home alive. What mattered it that Pery had saved the life of one person, if he put in jeopardy the existence of the whole family, and above all of herself? She ended this reflection exactly at the moment when Dom Antônio appeared at the door.

“Will you tell me, madam, what this noise is, and what is the cause?”

“There you have it!” exclaimed Dona Lauriana, pointing to the ounce with a proud gesture.

“Pretty animal!” said the nobleman, approaching and touching the tiger’s claws with his foot.

“O, you think it pretty! You will think it still more so when you know who brought it!”

“He must have been a good hunter,” said Dom Antônio, contemplating the beast with that huntsman’s fondness that characterized the nobleman of that period. “It does not bear the mark of a single wound!”

“It is the work of that copper-colored reprobate, Senhor Mariz!” answered Dona Lauriana, preparing for the attack.

“Oh!” said the nobleman laughing. “It is the animal Pery was pursuing yesterday, which Álvaro told us about.”

“Yes; and which he brought alive as if it had been a guinea-pig.”

“Brought alive! But don't you see it is impossible?”

“How impossible, if Ayres Gomes has but just killed it!”

Ayres Gomes wanted to reply, but the lady enjoined silence by a gesture.

The nobleman stooped and taking the animal by the ears raised it up. While examining the body to see if he could discover the mark of a ball, he noticed that the feet and jaws were bound.

“True!” murmured he. “It must have been alive an hour ago; it is still warm.”

Dona Lauriana let her husband contemplate the animal to his entire satisfaction, certain that the reflections this view would inspire could not but be favorable to her plan.

When she thought the moment had arrived. she took a step or two, arranged her train, and leaning forward slightly, addressed Dom Antônio.

“It is well you should see, Senhor Mariz, that I am never deceived. How many times have I told you that you were doing wrong in keeping that Indian? You would not believe me; you had an inexplicable weakness for the pagan. Well, then -” The lady assumed an oratorical tone, and accented the word with an energetic gesture, pointing to the dead animal: “There you have your reward. Your whole family threatened! You yourself, who might have gone out unwittingly; your daughter, who went to her bath ignorant of the danger, and might have been at this moment food for beasts.”

The nobleman shuddered at thought of the risk his daughter had run, and started to rush after her, but he heard a low murmuring of voices like the chirping of little birds; it was the two girls ascending the steps.

Dona Lauriana smiled at her triumph. “And if this were all!” continued she. “But it will not stop here; tomorrow you will see him bringing us an alligator, afterward a rattlesnake or a *jiboya*; he will fill our house with snakes and scorpions. We shall all be devoured alive here because a detested Indian has taken it into his head to practice his sorceries!”

“But you exaggerate the affair greatly, Dona Lauriana. Pery has certainly done a wild thing, but there is no reason why we should have such extravagant fears. He deserved a reprimand; I will give him one, and that severe. He will not do so again.”

“If you knew him as I do, Senhor Mariz! He is an Indian, and that is enough. You may scold him as much as you like; he will do so all the same from mere spite.”

“I do not share your apprehensions.”

The lady knew that she was losing ground, and resolved to give the decisive blow. She softened the tone of her voice and began to whimper. “Do what you like! You are a man and fear nothing! But I,” she continued shuddering, “shall not be able to sleep any more, imagining that a *jararaca*[17] is crawling into my bed, and by day I shall every moment think that a wildcat is ready to spring into my window, or that my clothes are full of caterpillars! No strength can endure such martyrdom!”

Dom Antônio began to reflect seriously on what his wife was saying, and to imagine the numberless spasms, swoonings, and outbursts of anger that the panic caused by the Indian would produce; nevertheless he still entertained the hope of being able to calm and dissuade her.

Dona Lauriana watched the effect of her last attack. She considered herself victorious.

XIII. THE DISCLOSURE.

ISABEL and Cecília, returning from the bath in conversation with each other, approached the door, not without some fear of the tiger, a fear dispelled by the smile of the aged nobleman fondly admiring his daughter’s beauty. Her hair was still wet, and now and then a pearly drop escaped and coursed down her pretty neck; her skin was fresh, as if waves of milk had flowed over her shoulders; her cheeks brilliant as two thistle-buds opening at sunset.

The two girls were talking with some vivacity, but on approaching the door, Cecília, who was a little in advance, turned on tiptoe to her cousin, and with a shade of petulance placed her finger on her lips, demanding silence.

“Do you know, Cecília, that your mother is very angry with Pery!” said Dom Antônio, clasping in his hands his daughter’s pretty face, and kissing her on the forehead.

“Why, father? Has he done anything?”

“One of his pranks, of which you already know part.”

“And I will tell you the rest!” interposed Dona Lauriana, placing her hand on her daughter’s arm. And she proceeded to set forth in the blackest colors and with the most dramatic emphasis, not only the imminent risk that in her opinion the whole house had run, but the perils still threatening the peace and quiet of the family. She related that if by miracle her housekeeper had not an hour or so before gone out on the esplanade, and seen the Indian performing diabolic ceremonies with the tiger, which naturally enough he was teaching how to enter the house, they would at that moment all be dead.

Cecília grew pale, remembering how carelessly and joyously she had crossed the valley and taken her bath; Isabel remained calm, but her eyes flashed.

“So,” concluded Dona Lauriana peremptorily, “it is not conceivable that we shall live any longer with such a plague in the house.”

“What do you say, mother?” exclaimed Cecília alarmed. “Do you intend to send him away?”

“Undoubtedly: that class of people, if indeed it deserves the title, is fit only to live in the woods.”

“But he loves us so! has done so much for us! Hasn’t he, father?” said the girl, turning to the nobleman.

Dom Antônio answered his daughter by a smile that reassured her.

“You will scold him, father; I will be angry,” continued Cecília, “and he will do better and will not act so any more.”

“But about what happened just now?” interposed Isabel, addressing Cecília.

Dona Lauriana, seeing that her cause had lost ground since the arrival of the girls, in spite of her repugnance for Isabel perceived that she had in her an ally, and addressed a word to her, an occurrence that took place not oftener than once a week.

“Come here, child; what is it you say happened just now?”

“Another danger that threatened Cecília.”

“No, mother! it was more tear on Isabel’s part than anything else.”

“Fear, yes; but from what I saw.”

“Tell me about it; and you, Cecília, stay there and keep quiet.”

Out of respect for her mother the girl did not venture to say another word; but taking advantage of the movement that Dona Lauriana made in turning to listen to Isabel, she shook her head to her cousin, praying her not to say anything. Isabel pretended not to notice the gesture, and replied to her aunt: “Cecília was bathing, and I had stayed on the river bank. Some time after that I saw Pery passing at a distance along the branch of a tree. He disappeared; and suddenly an arrow discharged from that place struck a few feet from my cousin.”

“Hear that, Senhor Mariz!” exclaimed Dona Lauriana. “Hear the miscreant’s villainy!”

“At the same moment,” continued Isabel, “we heard two pistol shots, which frightened us still more, because they also were certainly aimed in our direction.”

“Good heavens! It is worse than a joke! But who gave that ape pistols.”

“I did, mother,” timidly answered Cecília.

“You would better have said your prayers; you would better have with them - Heaven forgive me!”

Dom Antônio had heard Isabel’s words, though standing at some distance, and his countenance took on a grave expression. He made a sign to Cecília, and stepped aside with her as if for a walk on the esplanade.

“Is what your cousin says true?”

“Yes, father; but I am sure Pery did not do it maliciously.”

“Nevertheless,” replied the nobleman, “it may be repeated: on the other hand, your mother is alarmed; so it is better to send him away.”

“He will grieve very much.”

“And you and I too, for we esteem him; but we will not be ungrateful. I will discharge our debt of gratitude; leave that to my care.”

“Yes, father!” exclaimed the girl, with a look moist with thankfulness and admiration, “yes, you can appreciate everything noble!”

“You too, my Cecília!” replied the nobleman, caressing her.

“I learned in your heart and in your slightest actions.”

Dom Antônio embraced her.

“Oh! I have something to ask of you.”

“Tell me what it is; it is a long time since you have asked anything of me, and I have reason to complain of this.”

“You will have this animal preserved, won’t you?”

“Since you wish it.!

“It will be a memento to us of Pery.”

“To you, but to me you are the best memento. If it had not been for him, should I now be able to clasp you in my arms?”

“Do you know that I have a good mind to cry, just at the thought of his going away?”

“It is natural, my daughter; tears are a balm that God gives to the weakness of woman, and denies to the strength of man.”

The nobleman left his daughter, and approached the door where his wife, Isabel, and Ayres Gomes were still standing.

“What have you decided, Dom Antônio?” asked the lady.

“I have decided to do as you wish, for your quiet and my peace. Today, or at furthest tomorrow, Pery will leave this house; but, while he is here, *I* do not wish,” said he, emphasizing that monosyllable slightly, “a single unpleasant word spoken to him. Pery leaves this house because I ask him to, and not because he is ordered to do so by any one. Do you understand, my wife?”

Dona Lauriana, who knew how much energy and resolution there was in the imperceptible intonation given by the nobleman to that simple phrase, inclined her head.

“I charge myself with the duty of speaking to Pery! You will tell him, Ayres Gomes, to come to me.”

The esquire bowed; the nobleman, who was retiring, turned: “O, I forgot. You will have this pretty animal stuffed. I wish to preserve it; it will be a curiosity for my armory -”

Dona Lauriana made a sign of aversion.

“And will enable my wife to get accustomed to its sight, and have less fear of ounces.”

Dom Antônio withdrew.

The lady could then dress her hair and make her Sunday toilet; she had gained an important victory. Pery was finally to be expelled from the house, into which in her opinion he ought never to have entered.

Meantime, Cecília, upon parting from her father, had turned the corner of the house to go into the garden, and had encountered Álvaro walking up and down, restless and melancholy.

“Dona Cecília!” said the young man.

“O, leave me, Senhor Álvaro!” replied Cecília without stopping.

“In what have I offended you, that you treat me so?”

“Pardon me, I am sad; you have n’t offended me at all.”

“When one has committed a fault.”

“A fault?” asked the girl with surprise.

“Yes!” answered the young man with downcast look.

“And what fault have you committed, Senhor Álvaro?”

“I have disobeyed you.”

“Ah! it is a grave one!” said she, half smiling.

“Do not jest, Dona Cecília! If you only knew what uneasiness it has caused me! I have repented a thousand times of what I have done, and yet it seems to me I could do it again.”

“But, Senhor Álvaro, you forget that you are talking about a matter that I am ignorant of; I merely know that it concerns a disobedience.”

“You remember that yesterday you ordered me to keep an object that -”

“Yes,” interrupted the girl, blushing; “an object that -”

“That belonged to you, and which I, against your will, restored.”

“How! what do you say?”

“Pardon me! I was overbold! But -”

“But once for all, I do not understand a word of all this,” exclaimed the maiden, with some impatience.

Álvaro, at last overcoming his bashfulness, related rapidly what he had done the evening before.

Cecília upon hearing it became serious. “Senhor Álvaro,” said she, in a tone of reproach, “you did wrong to do such a thing, very wrong. Let no one know it, at all events.”

“I swear it on my honor!”

“It is not enough; you yourself must undo what you have done. I will not open that window while there is there an object that did not come from my father, and which I cannot touch.”

“Dona Cecília! -” stammered the young man, pale and downcast.

She raised her eyes, and saw on Álvaro’s countenance so much bitterness and despair that she was touched.

“Do not blame me,” said she in a gentle tone, “the fault is yours.”

“I feel it, and do not complain.”

“You saw that not being able to accept it I asked you to keep it as a memento.”

“And I will keep it still; it will teach me to expiate my fault, and will always recall it to me.”

“It will now be a sad recollection.”

“And can I have joyous ones?”

“Who knows!” said Cecília, disentangling a jasmine from her fair hair; “it is so pleasant to hope!”

Turning to conceal her blushes, she saw Isabel near by, devouring this scene with an ardent look. She uttered a cry of dismay and went quickly into the garden. Álvaro caught in the air the little flower, which had escaped from her fingers, and kissed it, thinking no one was there. When he saw Isabel, he was so much agitated that he let the jasmine fall without perceiving it. She caught it, and presenting it to him said in an inimitable tone of voice, “Also a restitution!”

Álvaro turned pale. The maiden trembling with excitement passed before him and entered her cousin’s room.

Cecília, upon seeing Isabel approach, blushed, and did not venture to raise her eyes, remembering what the latter had seen and heard; for the first time the innocent girl knew that there was something in her pure affection that should be concealed from the eyes of others. Isabel, upon entering her cousin's room, to which she had been drawn by an irresistible impulse, had repented immediately. Her agitation was so great that she feared to betray herself; she leaned against the bedstead in front of Cecília, silent, and with her eyes fixed upon the ground.

A long interval was thus passed; then the two girls almost at the same time raised their heads and looked toward the window. Their eyes met and both blushed still more. Cecília rebelled; the gay and sportive girl kept in a corner of her heart under her mirth and laughter the germ of that firmness of character that distinguished her father, and felt indignant at being obliged to blush with shame in the presence of another, as if she had done something wrong. She regained her courage, and formed a resolution whose energy was portrayed in an imperceptible movement of her eyebrows.

"Isabel, open that window."

Isabel started as if an electric spark had struck her, hesitated, but finally crossed the room. Two eager, ardent looks fell upon the window at the moment it was opened.

There was nothing there.

Isabel's emotion was so great that she involuntarily turned to her cousin, uttering an exclamation of pleasure; her countenance was lighted up with one of those divine reflections that appear to descend from heaven upon the head of a woman who loves.

Cecília looked at her cousin without understanding her; but little by little wonder and astonishment were depicted on her countenance.

"Isabel"

The girl fell on her knees at Cecília's feet.

She had betrayed herself.

XIV. THE INDIAN WOMAN.

SCARCELY did Pery feel his strength returning when he continued his pursuit through the forest. For a long time he followed the woman's track through the thicket with a rapidity and certainty incredible to one not acquainted with

the ease with which savages discover slightest traces left by the footsteps of any animal. A broken twig, a blade of grass trodden down, the dry leaves scattered and broken, a branch still vibrating, the dew-drops dissolved, - these are to their practiced eyes the same as a line traced in the forest, which they follow without hesitation.

There was a reason why Pery was so relentless in his pursuit of that inoffensive Indian woman, and made such extraordinary efforts to capture her. To understand that reason, it is necessary to become acquainted with certain events that had recently occurred in the neighborhood of the Paquequer. At the end of the moon of waters a tribe of Aymorés[18] had descended from the heights of the Organ Mountains to gather the fruits and prepare the wines, drinks, and different articles of food that they were accustomed to provide. A family of that tribe on a hunting excursion had appeared some days before on the banks of the Parahyba; it was composed of a savage, his wife, a son and a daughter. The daughter was a handsome maiden, for whose possession all the warriors of the tribe were contending; her father, the chief, felt a pride in having a daughter as beautiful as the prettiest arrow of his bow or the most graceful feather in his plume.

It is now Sunday: on Friday, at ten o'clock in the morning, Pery had been passing through the woods, imitating joyously the song of the *sahixé*, whose hissing notes he translated by the sweet name of *Cecy*. He was going in search of that animal that has played so important a part in this story, especially after its death. As no small jaguar would satisfy him he had determined to seek, in its peculiar domains, one of the kings of the mighty forests that border the Parahyba.

He was approaching a small brook, when a little shaggy dog ran out of the woods, immediately followed by an Indian girl, who took a step or two and fell, struck by a bullet. Pery turned to see whence the shot came, and recognized Dom Diogo de Mariz approaching slowly, accompanied by two adventurers. The young man was shooting at a bird, and the girl, passing at that moment, had received the charge of the musket and fallen dead.

The little dog sprang to his mistress howling, and began to lick her cold hands, and rub his head over her bloody body, as if seeking to reanimate her. Dom Diogo, leaning on his arquebuse, cast a look of pity upon that young victim of a hunter's carelessness. As for his companions, they laughed at the occurrence, and amused themselves by making remarks on the kind of game the cavalier had selected.

Suddenly the little dog raised its head, snuffed the air, and darted off like an arrow.

Pery, who had been a silent witness of this scene, advised Dom Diogo to return home as a matter of prudence, and continued his journey. The sight he had just witnessed had saddened him; he remembered his tribe, his brethren, whom he had abandoned so long ago, and who, perhaps at that moment, were also victims of the conquerors of their country, where formerly they had lived free and happy.

When he had gone about half a league, he saw at a distance a fire in the woods, around which were seated three Indians, two men and a woman. The elder man, of gigantic stature, was fixing to the tips of wild reeds the long, sharp teeth of the *capivara*, and whetting on a stone this terrible weapon. The younger was filling with small red and black seeds a nutshell, ornamented with feathers, and fastened to a handle a foot and a half long. The woman, who was still young, was carding a bunch of cotton, which fell in pure white tufts on a large leaf in her lap. Near the fire there was a small glazed vessel containing coals, upon which, from time to time, she threw some large dry leaves, which emitted dense clouds of smoke. Then the two Indians, by means of a reed, would inhale whiffs of this smoke until the tears started from their eyes, when they would continue their work.

While Pery was observing this scene from a distance, the dog sprang into the midst of the group. Scarcely had the animal recovered his breath, when he began to pull with his teeth at the feather mantle of the younger Indian, who with a push threw him several feet from him. He then went to the woman, repeated the same movement, and as he was ill received here also, leaped upon the cotton and began to bite it. She took him by the collar, made of berries, patted him on the back and smoothed his hair; it was stained with blood.

She examined him anxiously, and seeing no wound, cast her eyes around her and uttered a hoarse and guttural cry. The two Indians raised their heads, asking with their eyes the cause of that exclamation. As her only reply, the woman pointed to the blood on the animal, and spoke with a voice full of grief a word in a tongue that Pery did not understand.

The younger Indian sprang swiftly through the forest after the dog, which acted as guide; the elder one and the woman followed closely.

Pery understood perfectly all that was taking place, and pursued his way, thinking that the colonists must now be beyond the reach of the savages.

This is what he had seen; the rest, the occurrence at the bath had clearly revealed to him. The savages had found the body of their daughter and noticed the bullet-mark; for a long time they had sought in vain the hunters' tracks, until on the following day the cavalcade as it passed served to guide them. All night they had kept watch around the dwelling, and on that morning, seeing the two girls come out, had resolved to avenge themselves by the application of that law of retaliation which was the only principle of right and justice that they recognized. Their daughter had been slain; it was just that they should kill the daughter of their enemy; life for life, tear for tear, grief for grief. The result, we already know; the two savages were sleeping forever on the banks of the Paquequer, with no kind hand to give them burial.

It is now easy to see the reason why Pery pursued the woman, the last of the unfortunate family. He knew that she would go directly to her brethren, and that at the first word she uttered the whole tribe would rise as one man, to avenge the death of their chief, and the loss of the comeliest daughter of the Aymorés. He knew the ferocity of that

people, without country and without religion, who lived on human flesh, and dwelt like beasts on the ground and in dens and caves; he trembled at the thought of their attacking Dom Antônio's house. It was necessary, therefore, to exterminate the family and leave no trace of its existence.

Pery had spent nearly an hour in traversing the forest uselessly; the woman had gained a great advantage while he was struggling against the faintness produced by the wound. Finally he concluded that the wisest course was to warn Dom Antônio at once, that he might take all the precautions demanded by the imminence of the peril.

He had reached a field covered with groves of holm-oaks, scattered here and there upon the sharp and sunburnt grass. He had taken but a few steps across the field, when he stopped with a sign of surprise. Before him was panting a little dog, which he recognized by the collar of scarlet berries around its neck. It was the same that he had seen in the forest two days before. It had naturally followed the woman when she took to flight, and as it was hidden by the bushes he had not seen it. It had been strangled with so much violence as to break its neck; nevertheless it was still writhing.

At the first glance Pery had seen all this, and had judged what had occurred. That death, thought he, could have been caused only by a human being; any other animal would have used its teeth or claws, and would have left marks of a wound. The dog belonged to the Indian woman; it was she then that had strangled it, and but a few moments before, for its neck being broken, death would follow almost immediately.

But from what motive had she done that barbarous deed? Because, replied the Indian, she knew that she was pursued, and the dog, which could not keep up with her, might betray her.

Scarcely had Pery reached this conclusion when he lay down on the ground and listened for some time; twice he raised his head, thinking he was mistaken, and placed his ear again to the earth.

When he rose, his countenance betokened great surprise; he had heard something that he still seemed to doubt, as if his senses had deceived him.

He went toward the east listening on the ground at every moment, and thus came within a few feet of a large clump of thistles growing in a depression of the earth. Then, getting to leeward, he approached very cautiously, and heard a confused murmuring of voices and the sound of an implement digging.

He applied his ear and tried to see what was taking place beyond, but it was impossible; no opening admitted sound or sight. Only one who has traveled in the interior of Brazil, and seen those gigantic thistles whose broad leaves filled with thorns closely interlace, forming a high wall several feet thick, can have an idea of the impenetrable barrier that enclosed on all sides the persons whose voices Pery heard, but whose words he could not distinguish.

Nevertheless, those men must have got in there somewhere, and it could only be by the branch of a dead tree that extended over the thistles, around which twined a climbing plant, knotty and strong.

Pery was studying the situation, and endeavoring to discover means of learning what was taking place behind those trees, when a voice that he thought he recognized exclaimed: -

"*Per Dio!* Here it is!"

He started at hearing that voice, and resolved at whatever cost to know what those men were doing; he had a presentiment that there was a danger there to dispel and an enemy to combat. An enemy perhaps more terrible than the Aymorés, because if these were wild beasts, the other might be a serpent concealed among the flowers.

So he forgot everything else, and his thought was concentrated on a single object, - to hear what those men were saying.

But how? He was striving to answer; he had gone around the thicket, applying his ear, and thought that in one place the noise of voices and of the iron, which was still digging, reached him more distinctly.

He cast down his eyes, which immediately gleamed with pleasure. The cause was a simple mound of cracked clay, rising like a sugar loaf a foot and a half above the ground, and covered with plantain leaves. It was the entrance to an ant-hill, to one of those subterranean dwellings constructed by the little architects, who, by dint of patience and labor, undermine a whole field and form great vaults under the earth.

The one that Pery had discovered had been abandoned by its inhabitants, in consequence of a heavy rain that had penetrated into its interior.

The Indian drew his knife, and cutting off the dome of that miniature tower, laid bare an aperture that extended into the earth and certainly passed under the place where the persons talking were assembled. This aperture became for him a sort of acoustic tube, which brought the words clearly and distinctly to him.

He sat down and listened.

XV. THE THREE.

LOREDANO, who had left the house so quickly that same morning, as soon as he got into the woods, waited.

A quarter of an hour afterward Bento Simões and Ruy Soeiro met him.

The three went on together without uttering a word, the Italian walking in advance and the two adventurers following, exchanging occasionally a significant look.

Finally Ruy Soeiro broke the silence.

“It was certainly not to take an airing in the woods at the break of day that you brought us here, Sir Loredano?”

“No,” replied the Italian laconically.

“Well then, out with it at once, and let us not lose time.”

“Wait!”

“Wait, I say to *you*,” interposed Bento Simões; “you are going with a rush; where do you intend to take us on this route?”

“You shall see.”

“Since there is no way of getting a word out of you, go on, and God be with you, Sir Loredano.”

“Yes,” chimed in Ruy Soeiro, “go on, for we shall return the way we came.”

“When you are in the mood to speak, please inform us.”

And the two adventurers stopped, as if to retrace their steps. The Italian turned with a shrug of contempt. “Fools that you are,” said he. “If you think best, rebel now that you are in my power, and have no other recourse but to follow my fortunes! Return! I too will return, but to inform against all of us.”

The two adventurers turned pale.

“Do not remind me, Loredano,” said Ruy Soeiro, with a quick glance at his dagger, “that there is a way to close forever blabbing mouths.”

“That means,” replied the Italian contemptuously, “that you would kill me in case I purposed to inform against you?”

“On my faith, yes!” answered Ruy Soeiro in a tone that showed resolution.

“And I for my part would do the same! Our lives are dearer to us than your whims, Sir Italian.”

“And what would you gain by killing me?” asked Loredano smiling.

“That is good! What should we gain! Do you consider it a small thing to insure one’s existence and tranquillity of mind.”

“Fools!” said the Italian, with a look at once of contempt and pity. “Do you not see that when a man carries a secret like mine, unless that man be a blockhead of your description, he must have taken precautions against these little accidents!”

“I am aware that you are armed, and it is better so,” replied Ruy Soeiro: “it will be death rather than murder.”

“Say rather execution, Ruy Soeiro!” added Bento Simões.

The Italian continued: -

“These are not the arms that will serve me against you; I have others more powerful. Know only that alive or dead my voice will come from afar, even from the grave, to inform against you and avenge me.”

“Are you disposed to jest, Sir Italian? It is not a fit occasion.”

“When the time comes you will see whether I am jesting. I have placed my will in the hands of Dom Antônio de Mariz, who is to open it when he knows or thinks I am dead. In that will I set forth the relations that exist between us, and the purpose for which we are working.”

The two adventurers turned pale as ghosts.

“You understand now,” said Loredano, smiling, “that if you assassinate me, if any accident deprives me of life, if even I take it into my head to run away and give rise to the belief that I am dead, you are irretrievably lost.”

Bento Simões stood paralyzed, as if struck with catalepsy. Ruy Soeiro, in spite of the violent shock he experienced, succeeded with an effort in recovering his speech.

“It is impossible!” cried he. “What you say is false. No man would do such a thing.”

“Put it to the proof,” replied the Italian, calm and unmoved.

“He has done it... I am sure” - stammered Bento Simões in a low voice.

“No,” retorted Ruy Soeiro; “Satan would not do it. Come, Loredano, confess that you have deceived us, that you wanted to frighten us.”

“I have told the truth.”

“You lie!” cried the adventurer, with desperation.

The Italian smiled. Drawing his sword, he placed his hand upon the cross formed by the hilt, and said slowly, uttering the words one by one: “By this cross, and by Christ who suffered on it, by my honor in this world and my soul in the next, I swear it.”

Bento Simões fell upon his knees, crushed by this oath, which lost none of its solemnity amid the gloom and silence of the forest. Ruy Soeiro, pale, his eyes starting from their sockets, his lips quivering, his hair on end, his fingers extended and rigid, looked the image of despair. He stretched out his arms to Loredano, and exclaimed with a tremulous and choked voice, -

“Then, Loredano, you have confided to Dom Antônio de Mariz a paper containing the infernal plot we have concocted against his family?”

“I have.”

“And in that paper you wrote that you intend to assassinate him and his wife, and set fire to his house, if necessary to the realization of your purposes?”

“Everything.”

“You had the audacity to confess that you intend to carry off his daughter, and make of her, a noble maiden, the concubine of an adventurer and reprobate like yourself?”

“Yes.”

“And you also said,” continued Ruy in the extremity of his despair, “that his other daughter is to belong to us, who are to decide by lot which shall have her?”

“I forgot nothing, and least of all that important point,” replied the Italian with a smile; “everything is written on a parchment in the hands of Dom Antônio de Mariz. To learn its contents the nobleman has only to break the seals of black wax with which Master Garcia Ferreira, notary of Rio de Janeiro, closed it on the next to my last journey thither.” Loredano pronounced these words with the utmost coolness, his eyes fixed on the two adventurers, pale and humbled before him.

Some time was passed in silence.

“You now see,” said the Italian, “that you are in my power; let this serve you as an example. When once the foot is over the chasm, it is necessary to advance across, or roll off and fall to the bottom. Let us go on, then. Only of one thing I warn you; from today onward - obedience, blind and passive.”

The two adventurers said not a word; but their attitude was a better answer
than a thousand protestations.

“Lay aside now your mournful and terrified looks. I am alive, and Dom Antônio is a true nobleman, incapable of opening a will. Take heart, trust in me, and we shall soon reach the goal.”

Bento Simões’s face brightened.

“Speak clearly once, at least,” replied Ruy Soeiro.

“Not here; follow me, and I will take you to a place where we will converse freely.”

“Wait,” joined in Bento Simões. “Before anything else, reparation is due to you. A little while ago we threatened you; here are our weapons.”

“Yes, after what has passed it is just that you should distrust us; take them.”

They both took off their daggers and swords.

“Keep your weapons,” said Loredano, in a mocking tone. “They will aid you to defend me. I know how dear and precious my life is to you.”

Both adventurers turned pale, and followed the Italian.

After a half hour’s walk they reached the clump of thistles already described. At a sign from Loredano, his companions climbed the tree and descended by the vine into the center of that thorn-enclosed space, which was at most but twenty feet long by ten or twelve wide.

On one side, in a depression of the ground, was a kind of vault, or cave, the remains of one of those great anthills, now half destroyed by the rain. There, in the shade of a small shrub that had sprung up among the thistles, the three adventurers seated themselves.

“Oh!” said the Italian at once. “It’s some time since I have been in these parts, but I think there must still be something here that will tickle your palates.”

He leaned back, and thrusting his arm into the cavity, drew out a flagon that was lying there, which he placed in the midst of the group.

“It is Caparica[19], and of the best. Not much of it comes this way.”

“The devil! You have a cellar here!” exclaimed Bento Simões, whom the sight of the flagon had restored to good humor.

“To tell the truth,” said Ruy, “I should have expected anything sooner than to see a flagon of wine come out of that hole.”

“But here it is, you see. As I am accustomed to come to this place, where I am sometimes much exposed to the sun, it was necessary to have a companion with which to amuse myself.”

“And you could not find a better!” said Bento Simões, taking a good drink and smacking his lips. “I have long been wanting something of this sort.”

Each of the three took his turn at the wine, and the flagon was replaced.

“Well,” said the Italian, “now let us proceed to business. I promised, when I invited you to follow me, to make you rich, very rich.”

The adventurers nodded.

“The promise I made is about to be fulfilled; the wealth is here, near us; we can touch it.”

“Where?” asked the adventurers, looking eagerly around.

“Not so quick! I was speaking figuratively. I mean that the riches are before us, but to obtain them it is necessary -”

“What is necessary? Speak!”

“At the proper time. I wish now to tell you a story.”

“A story!” said Ruy Soeiro.

“Some nursery tale?” asked Bento Simões.

“No, a story true as a bull of our Holy Father. Have you ever heard of a certain Robério Dias?”

“Robério Dias? - Ah! Yes! of Salvador?” asked Ruy Soeiro.

“The very same.”

“I saw him, some eight years ago, in São Sebastião, whence he went to Spain.”

“And do you know, friend Bento Simões, what business called that worthy descendant of Caramuru[20] to Spain?” asked the Italian.

“I have heard a report that it concerned a fabulous treasure, which he intended to offer to Philip II, who in return was to make him a marquis and grandee.”

“And what followed? Has not that come to your knowledge?”

“No; I have never heard anything further about that Robério Dias.”

“Then listen. Upon his arrival at Madrid, he hastened to make his offer, and was received in the palm of the hand by Philip II., who, as you know, had very long nails.”

“And threw dust in his eyes like the fox that he was?” suggested Ruy Soeiro.

“You are mistaken; this time the fox became a monkey; he wanted to see the cocoanut before paying for it.”

“And what then?”

“Then,” said the Italian, smiling wickedly, “the cocoanut was empty.”

“How empty?”

“Yes, friend Ruy, there was left to him merely the shell; fortunately for us, who shall enjoy the meat.”

“You are full of enigmas, Loredano!”

“Put a man to the rack and he could n’t understand you.”

“Is it my fault that you are not acquainted with the history of your country?”

“All are not as learned as you, Dom Italian.”

“Well, let us end the matter at once; what Robério Dias intended to offer at Madrid to Philip II is here, my friends.”

And Loredano at the word placed his hand on a stone at his side.

The two adventurers looked at each other without comprehending the movement, and began to doubt their companion’s sanity. He, without regarding what they thought, drew his sword, and after removing the stone, began to dig. While he was engaged in this labor, the others, watching him, passed the flagon of wine back and forth, and made conjectures and guesses.

The Italian had been digging for some time, when the steel struck some hard object that caused it to ring.

“*Per Dio!*” he cried, “here it is!”

Some moments after he drew out of the hole one of those glazed earthern vessels that the Indians call *camuci*; this was small and closed on all sides. Loredano, taking it in both hands, shook it, and felt the almost imperceptible movement of some object within.

“Here,” said he slowly, “you have the treasure of Robério Dias; it is ours. A little prudence, and we shall be richer than the Sultan of Bagdad, and more powerful than the Doge of Venice.”

He struck the vessel against the stone and broke it in pieces.

The adventurers, with eyes on fire with greed, expecting to see waves of gold, diamonds, and emeralds, flow forth, were stupefied. The vessel contained merely a small roll of parchment covered with red leather, and tied crosswise with a dark-colored string.

Loredano cut the knot with the point of his dagger, and opening the parchment rapidly, showed the adventurers an inscription in large red letters.

Ruy Soeiro uttered a cry; Bento Simões began to tremble with pleasure and astonishment.

After a moment the Italian extended his hand to the paper, which lay in the midst of the group, and his eyes assumed a stern expression.

“Now,” said he, his voice vibrating, “now that you have the riches and the power within your grasp, swear that your arms will not tremble when the occasion comes; that you will obey my gesture, my word, as the decree of fate.”

“We swear it!”

“I am tired of waiting, and am determined to take advantage of the first opportunity. To me as chief,” said the Italian with a diabolic smile, “should belong Dom Antônio de Mariz; I surrender him to you, Ruy Soeiro. Bento Simões shall have the esquire; I claim as mine Álvaro de Sá, the noble cavalier.”

“I will lead Ayres Gomes a pretty dance!” said Bento Simões with a martial air.

“The rest, if they trouble us, shall go afterward; if they join us, they will be welcome. Only I warn you that he who shall cross the threshold of Cecília’s door is a dead man; she is my share of the booty, the lion’s share!”

At that instant a noise was heard as if the leaves had been agitated. The adventurers paid no attention to it, and naturally attributed it to the wind.

“A few days more, my friends,” continued Loredano, “and we shall be rich, noble, powerful as kings. You, Bento Simões, shall be Marquis of Paquequer; you, Ruy Soeiro, Duke of Minas; I - What shall I be?” said Loredano, with a smile that lighted up his intelligent countenance. “I shall be -”

A word issued from the bosom of the earth, low and hollow, as if a sepulchral voice had pronounced it.

“TRAITORS!” The three adventurers sprang to their feet together, pale and rigid, like corpses rising from the grave.

The two crossed themselves. The Italian raised himself by the branch of the tree, and looked hurriedly around.

All was still. The sun in the zenith was diffusing an ocean of light; not a leaf was stirring, not an insect sporting on the grass. Day in its splendor held sway over nature.

PART SECOND:

PERY

I. THE CARMELITE.

IT was March, 1603, and therefore a year before the opening of this story.

By the side of the road followed by the then infrequent expeditions between Rio de Janeiro and Espírito Santo stood a large inn, where dwelt some colonists and Christianized Indians. It was almost nightfall. One of those fearful tempests that frequently occur on the slopes of mountain ranges was descending upon the earth. The bellowing wind lashed the huge trees, which bowed before it their aged trunks; the thunder reverberated in the dense clouds driven hither and thither through the sky; and the lightning flashed with such frequency that forests, mountains, nature itself, seemed bathed in an ocean of fire. In the spacious hall three persons were watching with a certain pleasure the dreadful struggle of the elements.

One of these men, short and fat, reclining in a hammock in the center of the porch, with his legs crossed and his arms folded uttered an exclamation at each new havoc of the tempest.

The second, leaning against one of the rosewood pillars that supported the roof, was of a swarthy complexion, and about forty years old; his face showed some traces of Jewish blood; his eyes were fixed on a path that wound in front of the house and was lost in the forest.

Opposite him, leaning against the other column was a Carmelite friar, who watched with a smile of profound satisfaction the progress of the storm. His handsome face and strongly marked features were animated by a ray of intelligence, and an expression of energy that clearly revealed his character. Seeing this man smiling at the tempest

and meeting with unflinching eye the flash of the lightning, one perceived that his soul possessed a strength of resolution and an indomitable will capable of wishing the impossible, and contending against heaven and earth to obtain it.

Brother Angelo di Luca was there as a missionary, charged with the propagation of the faith, and the care of souls among the heathen in that region. In the six months of his ministry he had succeeded in civilizing several families, and expected soon to receive them into the bosom of the Church. A year had passed since he had obtained from the general of his order the privilege of leaving his convent in Rome, that of Santa Maria Transpontina, for the house which the order had founded in Rio de Janeiro in 1590, to engage in missionary labors. Both the general and the provincial of Lisbon, touched by his ardent religious enthusiasm, had expressly recommended him to Brother Diogo do Rosario, then prior of the convent in Rio de Janeiro, asking Rosario to employ in the service of the Lord and in the glory of the order of the Most Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel the zeal and holy fervor of Brother Angelo di Luca. Thus it was that the son of a fisherman from the lagoons of Venice found himself in the interior of Brazil, leaning against the pillar of a house, watching a tempest which was redoubling in fury.

“Shall you start tonight all the same, Fernão Aines?” said the man in the hammock.

“At daybreak,” replied the other, without turning.

“And with such weather?”

“It is not that that hinders me, you are well aware, Master Nunes. This cursed hunting excursion!”

“Do you fear that your men will not return from it in time?”

“I fear that destruction will overtake them all in the forests in such a storm.”

The friar turned. “Those who follow the law of God are secure everywhere, brother, - in a wilderness as in this building: the evil alone have to fear the fire from heaven and find no shelter to save them.”

Fernão Aines smiled ironically. “Do you believe that, Brother Angelo?”

“I believe in God, brother.”

“Very well; but I prefer to be where I am, rather than standing on some precipice.”

“Nevertheless,” spoke Nunes, “what our reverend missionary says -”

“Brother Angelo may say what he will. Here, I laugh at the tempest; there, the tempest would laugh at me.”

“Fernão Aines!” exclaimed Nunes.

“Cursed idea of a hunting excursion!” muttered the other without noticing him.

Silence was re-established. Suddenly a cloud opened; the electric current, winding through the air like a fiery serpent, struck a cedar standing in front of the building.

The tree was rent asunder from tip to root; one part remained standing, slender and mutilated; the other fell and struck Fernão Aines on the breast, hurling him mangled to the rear of the porch.

His companion remained motionless for some time, and then began to shake as though shivering with ague; with his thumb extended to make the sign of the cross, his teeth chattering, and his features contracted, he presented an appearance at once terrible and grotesque.

The friar had turned livid, as though he were the victim of the catastrophe; terror for a moment disturbed his countenance; but a sardonic smile quickly escaped from his lips, still bloodless from the shock.

After the first fright, they both went to help the wounded man; he made a great effort, and raising himself on one arm uttered, amid a stream of blood, the words, “A punishment from heaven!” Perceiving that there was no hope for his body, the dying man sought spiritual remedies, and with a weak voice asked Brother Angelo to hear his confession. Nunes took him to a room that opened into the porch, and laid him on a leather bed.

It was already dark; the room was in the greatest obscurity, only illuminated now and then for an instant by the lightning, which threw its bluish light upon the confessor, leaning over the penitent to catch his voice, which was gradually becoming weaker.

“Hear me without interruption, father; I feel that I have but a few moments left, and though there may be no pardon for me, I wish at least to make amends for my crime.”

“Speak, brother; I am listening.”

“Last November I arrived at Rio de Janeiro, and was entertained by a relative of mine; both he and his wife gave me the most cordial reception.

“Having during his life as an adventurer traveled much through the interior, my relative spoke to me one day of joining him in an expedition which would result in great riches for us both.

“On different occasions we conversed about this project, until he unfolded it completely to me.

“The father of one Robério Dias, a colonist of Bahia, guided by an Indian, had discovered in the interior of that province silver mines so rich that they might pave the street of Lisbon with that metal.

“As he had to traverse a pathless and inhospitable wilderness, Dias had written down the necessary directions to enable any one to find at any time the place where those mines are situated.

“The paper had been abstracted from its owner without his knowledge, and through a long series of events, which I have not strength to relate, had come into the hands of my relative.

“Of how many crimes had this paper already been the cause, father, and of how many more it would have been, if God had not finally punished in me the last heir of this legacy of blood!”

The dying man stopped for a moment, exhausted, and then continued feebly: -

“It had already become known upon the arrival of Governor Dom Francisco de Souza that Robério had offered to Philip II at Madrid, the discovery of these mines, and that the King not having rewarded him as he hoped, he persisted in keeping silent.

“The reason of this silence, which was generally attributed to spite, was known only to my relative, who held the paper: Robério, upon his arrival in Spain, had ascertained his loss, and had wished at least to secure the reward.

“The secret of the mines, the key to that wealth surpassing all the treasures of the caliph, was in the hands of my relative, who, needing a devoted man to aid him in the undertaking, thought he could choose no one more suitable than myself to share his risks and hopes.

“I accepted this partnership of crime, this compact of robbery, father. It was my first misstep!”

The voice of the adventurer became still more inaudible. The friar, leaning over him, seemed to devour with his half-opened lips the words murmured by the dying man.

“Courage, son!”

“Yes! I must tell all!... Fascinated by the description of that fabulous treasure, I entertained a wicked thought.... that thought became a desire... then a plan, and finally was realized. It was a crime! I assassinated my relative and his wife.”

“And -” suggested the friar, in a hoarse voice.

“And stole the secret!”

The friar smiled in the darkness.

“Now it only remains for me to seek God’s mercy, and to make reparation for the evil I have done.... Robério is dead, his wife is living in distress in Bahia.... I wish this paper delivered to her.... Do you promise, Brother Angelo?”

“I promise! The paper?”

“Is... concealed…”

“Where?”

“In yon... der…”

The dying man gasped.

Brother Angelo, leaning completely over him, with his ear pressed to the sufferer’s mouth, from which bubbled forth a bloody foam, and his hand upon the heart to see whether it was still palpitating, seemed eager to retain the last breath of life, in order to draw from him one word more.

“Where?” murmured the friar from time to time, in a hollow voice.

The sick man kept gasping; the last throes of life, which goes out like a flickering lamp, scarcely moved his benumbed body.

Finally the friar saw him raise his stiffened arm, pointing to the wall, and felt his icy lips, quivering convulsively, whisper in his ear a word that caused him to spring upon the bed.

“Cross!”

Friar Angelo stood up, and looked wildly around the room. On the head of the bed was an iron image of Christ upon a large wooden cross, rough and ill-wrought.

With mad eagerness the friar seized the cross and broke it upon his knee. The image rolled to the floor. Between the pieces of wood appeared a roll of parchment, flattened by the pressure to which it had been exposed.

He broke the seal with his teeth, and going to the window read by the uncertain aid of the lightning the first words of an inscription in red letters, which ran thus: -

True and exact description of the route which Robério Dias, the elder, followed in the year of grace 1587, to the neighborhood of Jacobina, where with the favor of God he discovered the richest mines of silver that exist in the world; with a summary of the signs, landmarks, and latitude, of the locality where those said mines lie; begun on the twentieth of January, the day of the martyr Saint Sebastian, and terminated on the first Sunday in Lent, on which with the blessing of Providence we reached this city of Salvador.

While the friar was endeavoring to read, the dying man was struggling in the last agony, awaiting perhaps the final absolution and extreme unction of the penitent. But the monk saw only the paper that he had in his hands, and sinking upon a bench, with his head resting on his arm, fell into a deep meditation.

What was he thinking? He was not thinking; he was raving. Before his eyes his excited imagination exhibited a sea of silver, an ocean of molten metal, white and resplendent, that was lost in immensity. The waves of that silvery sea now flowed in gentle undulations, now rolled in angry billows, throwing off flakes of foam that resembled diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, sparkling in the sunlight.

Sometimes, too, on that smooth and polished surface were reflected, as in a glass, enchanted palaces, women beautiful as the houris of the prophet, virgins graceful as the angels of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Thus slipped away half an hour, during which the silence was broken only by the loud breathing of the dying man and the roar of the thunder; then ensued an ill-boding calm; the sinner was dying impenitent.

Brother Angelo rose in a desperate mood, tore off his habit, and trampled it under foot; on the bedstead was a change of clothing, which he put on; he then took the weapons from the dead body, seized the felt hat, and clasping the manuscript to his breast, moved to ward the door.

The footsteps of Nunes walking in the porch without were heard.

The friar stopped; the unexpected presence of this man before the door gave him an inspiration. He took up his habit, put it on over his new garments, an concealing the adventurer's hat in his sleeve, covered himself with his large cowl; then he opened the door and approached Nunes.

"*Consummatum est*, brother!" said he in a sorrowful tone.

"May God have mercy on his soul!"

"So I hope, if strength does not fail me, to carry out his last vow, which is a reparation."

"For a grave sin?"

"For a crime, brother. Give me a light; I am going to write to Brother Diogo do Rosario, our prior, for perhaps I shall never return, nor you hear any further news of me."

The friar wrote by the light of a torch a few lines to the prior of the convent in Rio de Janeiro, and taking leave of Nunes, set out.

As he was turning a corner, the heavens opened, and the earth was ablaze with the glare of a lightning-flash, so vivid as to dazzle him. Two bolts, describing fiery spirals in the air, had struck the forest, and diffused around a suffocating smell of brimstone.

The Carmelite was seized with a vertigo; he remembered the recent scene, the terrible punishment which he himself had foretold, and which had been so speedily realized.

But the dazed feeling passed away: still trembling and pale with terror, the reprobate raised his arm as if in defiance of the wrath of heaven, and uttered a horrible blasphemy: -

“You may kill me; but if you spare my life, I will be rich and powerful, though the whole world oppose!” There was in these words something of the impotent rage and fury of Satan hurled into the abyss by the irrevocable sentence of the Creator.

Going on in the darkness, he reached a large hut in the rear of the inn, in which he had gathered a few families of Indians; he entered and awoke one of the savages, whom he ordered to prepare to accompany him at the break of day.

The rain was falling in torrents, while the wind beat against the thatch walls, and whistled through the straw. The friar did not close his eyes, but spent the night in thought, tracing in his mind an infernal plan, in the accomplishment of which he would be deterred by no obstacle: now and then he would rise to see if the horizon was yet illuminated.

Finally day came; the storm had exhausted itself during the night; the weather was calm.

The Carmelite, accompanied by the savage, set out; he wandered over forest and plain in every direction; he was in search of something. After two hours he espied the clump of thistles near which a year later occurred the last scene that we have narrated; he examined it on all sides, and smiled with satisfaction.

Climbing the tree and descending by the vine, he and the savage entered the space with which we are already acquainted. The sun had been a short time above the horizon. On the next day, at about two o’clock in the afternoon, a single man issued from that place; it was neither the friar nor the savage. It was a bold and fearless adventurer, on whose face the features of the Carmelite, Angelo di Luca, were still recognizable.

This adventurer was Loredano. He left in that place, buried in the bosom of the earth, a terrible secret, - a roll of parchment, a friar’s cloak, and a corpse.

Five months afterward, the vicar of the order informed the general at Rome that Brother Angelo di Luca had died as a saint and martyr, through his zeal for the apostolic faith.

II. YARA.

ON a fine summer evening, two days after the scene at the inn, the family of Dom Antônio de Mariz was assembled on the bank of the Paquequer, in a little valley between two rocky hills.

The grass that carpeted the rugged slopes and the trees that had sprung up in the fissures of the rocks, and inclining over the valley, wove a pretty canopy of verdure, made the retreat very picturesque. There could be no more agreeable place to spend a summer afternoon than that arbor full of shade and freshness, where the song- of the birds formed a concert with the tremulous murmuring of the waters. Therefore, though it was at some distance from the house, the family occasionally came, when the weather was good, to enjoy some hours of the delicious coolness that lingered there.

Dom Antônio, seated by the side of his wife, was surveying through an opening in the foliage the blue and velvety sky of our country, which the sons of Europe never tire of admiring. Isabel, leaning against a young palm tree, was watching the current of the river, and softly murmuring a lay of Bernardim Ribeiro.[21]

Cecília was running about in the valley, chasing a pretty humming bird, which in its rapid flight shone with a thousand colors. The lovely girl, laughing at the turns the little bird made her take, as if it were playing with her, found in this amusement a lively pleasure. But finally, feeling tired, she went and reclined on a mound of grass, which formed a natural sofa at the foot of the rock. She rested her head on the slope, while her little feet nestled in the grass, which concealed them like the wool of a rich carpet.

Some time passed without the smallest incident to disturb the pleasing tableau formed by their family group. Suddenly through the canopy of verdure that covered the scene, was heard a shrill cry, and a word in a strange tongue:

“Yara!”

It is a Guarany term, signifying lady. Dom Antônio rose, and casting his eyes rapidly around, saw on the height overhanging the place where Cecília was lying, a strange picture.

Standing firmly braced on the narrow space, an Indian covered with a light cotton tunic was supporting with his shoulder a fragment of rock that had become detached from its bed and was on the point of rolling down the declivity. He was making a supreme effort to sustain the weight of the stone, which was ready to crush him, and with his arm extended to the branch of a tree was keeping his balance by a violent tension of his muscles. The tree quivered; for some moments it seemed that rock and man would give way together and be hurled upon the girl.

Cecília upon hearing the cry, raised her head and looked at her father with some surprise, without suspecting the danger that threatened her. To see, to spring to his daughter, to take her in his arms and snatch her from death, was the sole thought of Dom Antônio, which he acted on with all the strength and impetuosity of paternal love.

As the nobleman laid Cecília almost swooning in her mother's lap, the Indian leaped into the valley; the rock, rolling over and over from the top of the hill, buried itself deeply in the ground. Then the spectators of this scene, recovering from the shock, uttered a cry of terror at thought of the danger that was already past.

A wide furrow, descending from the eminence to the place where Cecília had been reclining, showed the course the rock had taken, tearing up the grass and plowing the ground. Dom Antônio, still pale and shuddering at the danger to which Cecília had been exposed, turned his eyes from that spot, which to his imagination looked like a grave, to the Indian, who had risen like a beneficent genius of the Brazilian forests. The nobleman did not know which to admire more, the strength and heroism by which he had saved his daughter, or the miracle of agility by which he had rescued himself from death.

As to the feeling that had prompted that act, Dom Antônio felt no astonishment; he was acquainted with the character of our savages, so unjustly calumniated by historians, and knew that apart from war and revenge they were generous, capable of a great action and a noble impulse.

For some time an expressive silence reigned in that group, which had been transformed in so unlooked for a manner. Dona Lauriana and Isabel were on their knees returning thanks to God; Cecília, still frightened, leaned on her father's breast and kissed his hand affectionately; while the Indian, humble and submissive, kept his eyes fixed on the girl he had saved, with a look of deep admiration.

Finally Dom Antônio, putting his left arm around his daughter's waist, advanced and extended his hand with a noble and kindly manner; the Indian bowed and kissed it.

"To what tribe do you belong?" asked the nobleman in Guarany.

"I am a Goytacaz," replied he proudly.

"What is your name?"

"Pery, son of Ararê, first of his tribe."

"I am a Portuguese nobleman, a white enemy to your race, conqueror of your land; but you have saved my daughter; I offer you my friendship."

"Pery accepts it; you were already a friend."

“How so?” asked Dom Antônio with surprise.

“Listen.”

The Indian began in his language, so rich and poetical, with the sweet pronunciation that he seemed to have learned from the breezes of his country or the birds of the virgin forests, this simple narrative:

“It was the time when the trees were golden.[22]

“The earth covered the body of Ararê and his arms, except his war-bow.

“Pery called the warriors of his tribe and said: My father is dead; he who shall prove himself the bravest of all shall have Ararê’s bow. War!’

“Thus spoke Pery; the warriors answered, War!’

“While the sun lighted up the earth we marched; when the moon rose in the heavens we arrived. We fought like Goytacazes. The whole night was one battle. There was blood, there was fire.

“When Pery lowered Ararê’s bow there was not in the city of the white men a cabin standing, a man alive; all were ashes.

“The day came and illuminated the field; the wind came and carried away the ashes. “Pery had prevailed; he was the first of his tribe and the mightiest of all the warriors. “His mother came, and said: ‘Pery, chief of the Goytacazes, son of Ararê, you are great, you are brave like your father; your mother loves you.’

“The warriors came and said, ‘Pery, chief of the Goytacazes, son of Ararê, you are the most valiant of the tribe and the most feared by the enemy; the warriors obey you.’

“The women came and said: ‘Pery, first of all, you are handsome as the sun and flexible as the wild reeds[23] that gave you your name; the women are your slaves.’

“Pery heard, and did not reply; neither the voice of his mother, nor the song of the warriors, nor the love of the women made him smile.

“In the house of the cross, in the midst of the fire, Pery had seen the Lady of the white men. She was fair as the daughter of the moon. She was beautiful as the heron of the river. “She had the color of the sky in her eyes; the color of the sun in her hair; she was clothed with clouds, with a girdle of stars and a plume of light.

“The fire ceased; the house of the cross fell.

“At night Pery had a dream; the Lady appeared; she was sad, and spoke thus: ‘Pery, free warrior, you are my slave; you will follow me everywhere as the great star accompanies the day.’

“The moon had reversed her red bow when we returned from the war. Every night Pery saw the Lady in her cloud. She did not touch the earth and Pery could not ascend into the sky.

“The cashew, when it loses its leaf, seems dead; it has neither flower nor shade, and weeps tears sweet as the honey of its fruit. So was Pery sad.

“The Lady appeared no more, but Pery saw her always before his eyes.

“The trees became green; the little birds built their nests; the sabiá[24] sang; everything laughed; the son of Ararê remembered his father.

“The time of war came.

“We set out; we marched; we reached the great river. The warriors set the nets; the women made a fire; Pery looked at the sun.

“He saw the hawk pass. If Pery were the hawk, he would go and see the Lady in the sky.

“He saw the wind pass. If Pery were the wind, he would carry the Lady in the air.

“He saw the shadow pass. If Pery were the shadow, he would accompany the Lady by night.

“The little birds slept thrice. His mother came and said: ‘Pery, son of Ararê, a white warrior saved your mother, a white maiden also.’

“Pery took his weapons and set out; he was going to see the white warrior, to be his friend, and the daughter of the Lady to be her slave.

“The sun was nearing the midheavens, and Pery also was nearing the river; he saw in the distance your great house.

“The white maiden appeared.

“She was the Lady whom Pery had seen; she was not sad as the first time; she was joyous; she had left behind the cloud and the stars.

“Pery said: ‘The Lady has descended from the sky because the moon, her mother, gave her leave; Pery, son of the sun, will accompany the Lady on earth.’

“Pery’s eyes were on the Lady, but his ear was attentive. The rock cracked and threatened to injure the Lady.

“The Lady had saved Pery’s mother; Pery did not wish the Lady to become sad and return to the sky.

“White warrior, Pery, first of his tribe, son of Ararê, of the Goytacaz nation, mighty in war, offers you his bow; you are a friend.”

The Indian here ended his story.

While he was speaking, an appearance of savage pride of strength and courage gleamed in his black eyes, and lent an air of nobility to his demeanor. Though ignorant, a son of the forests, he was a king; he had the royalty of strength. As soon as he had ended, the pride of the warrior disappeared; he became timid and modest; he was now only a barbarian in the presence of civilized beings, whose superiority of education he instinctively recognized.

Dom Antônio listened to him smiling at his style, now figurative, now simple as the first sentences that the child lisps on its mother’s breast. The nobleman translated as well as he could this poetical language to Cecília, who, recovered from her fright, was eager - in spite of the fear that the Indian caused her - to know what he said.

It was evident from the story than an Indian woman who had been rescued two days before by Dom Antônio from the hands of the adventurers, and whom Cecília had loaded with presents of blue and scarlet beads, was Pery’s mother.

“Pery,” said the nobleman, “when two men meet and become friends, the one who is at the other’s house receives his hospitality.”

“It is a custom that the aged have transmitted to the youth of the tribe and the fathers to the sons.”

“You will take supper with us.”

“Pery obeys you.”

The evening was waning; the first stars began to appear. The family, accompanied by Pery, went to the house and ascended the esplanade.

Dom Antônio went in for a moment and returned with a beautiful carbine, bearing the nobleman’s coat of arms, the same that we have already seen in the hands of the Indian.

“It is my faithful companion, my weapon of war; it never hung fire, never missed the mark; its ball is like the arrow of your bow. Pery, you have given me my daughter; my daughter gives you her father’s war-gun.”

The Indian received the present with deep gratitude.

“This weapon, which comes from the Lady, and Pery will form but one body.”

The bell in the courtyard sounded the hour of supper. The Indian, harassed by strange customs, and under the influence of a feeling of awe, did not know how to act. In spite of every effort on the part of the nobleman, who felt an indescribable pleasure in showing him how much he appreciated his act, and how overjoyed he was to see his daughter alive, the savage did not touch a mouthful.

Finally Dom Antônio, perceiving that every entreaty was vain, filled two goblets with Canary wine.

“Pery,” said the nobleman, “there is a custom among the whites for a man to drink to him who is his friend. Wine is the liquor that imparts strength, courage, joy. To drink to a friend is a way of saying that the friend is and shall be strong, courageous, and happy. I drink to the son of Ararê.”

“And Pery drinks to you, because you are the father of the Lady; drinks to you, because you saved his mother; drinks to you, because you are a warrior.”

At each word the Indian touched the goblet, and drank a mouthful of wine, without making the least sign of dislike; he would have drunk poison to the health of Cecília’s father.

III. THE EVIL GENIUS.

PERY had returned at different times to the house.

The aged nobleman received him cordially, and treated him as a friend; his noble character sympathized with that uncultured nature. But Cecília, in spite of the gratitude that his devotion to her inspired, could not overcome the fear she felt at seeing one of those savages of whom her mother gave her so hideous a description, and whose name had been used to frighten her when a child.

On Isabel the Indian had made the same impression that the presence of a man of his color always produced; she remembered her unhappy mother, the race from which she sprung, and the cause of the contempt with which she was commonly treated.

As for Dona Lauriana, she saw in Pery a faithful dog that had rendered a service to the family, and was sufficiently rewarded with a piece of bread. We must, however, say that it was not from a bad heart that she thought so, but in consequence of prejudices of education.

One morning, a fortnight after Cecília had been rescued by Pery, Ayres Gomes crossed the esplanade, and sought Dom Antônio, who was in his armory.

“Dom Antônio, the stranger to whom you gave hospitality two weeks ago, asks an audience of you.”

“Show him in.”

Ayres Gomes introduced the stranger. It was that Loredano into whom the Carmelite, Brother Angelo di Luca, had transformed himself.

“What do you wish, friend? Is anything lacking?”

“On the contrary, sir, I am so well situated that my desire would be to remain.”

“And who hinders you? As our hospitality does not ask the name of the seeker, so also it does not inquire the time of his departure.”

“Your hospitality is that of a true nobleman; but it is not of that that I wish to speak.”

“Explain yourself, then.”

“One of your band is going to Rio de Janeiro, where he has a wife and children, who have arrived from the kingdom.”

“Yes; he spoke to me about it yesterday.”

“You lack, then, one man; I can be that man, if you have no objection.”

“None whatever.”

“In that case, may I consider myself admitted?”

“Wait; Ayres Gomes will explain to you the conditions to which you subject yourself; if you agree to them the business is decided.”

“I believe I already understand those conditions,” said the Italian, smiling. “Nevertheless, go.”

The nobleman called his esquire, and charged him to acquaint the Italian with the conditions of the company of adventurers that he had in his service. This was one of the prerogatives of Ayres Gomes, who discharged it with all the gravity of which his somewhat grotesque appearance was susceptible. Upon reaching the esplanade, the esquire drew himself up, and began the following introduction: -

“Law, statute, rule, discipline, or by whatever better name it may be called, to which every one subjects himself who enters into the service of the Cavalier Dom Antônio de Mariz, nobleman of rank, of the stock of the Marizes in direct line.”

Here the esquire moistened his throat, and then proceeded: -

“First: Unquestioning obedience. Whoever refuses shall suffer death.”

The Italian made a sign of approval.

“This means. Sir Italian, that if some day Dom Antônio orders you to leap down from this rock, say your prayers and leap; for in one way or the other, feet foremost or head foremost, on the faith of Ayres Gomes, you will have to go.”

Loredano smiled.

“Secondly: To be contented with what there is. Whoever -”

“With your leave, Senhor Ayres Gomes, do not give yourself unnecessary trouble; I know all that you are going to say, and therefore excuse you from continuing.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that all the comrades, each one in his turn, have already described to me the ceremony that you are now putting in practice.”

“Nevertheless -”

“It is useless. I know everything, accept everything, swear everything you wish.”

And saying this the Italian turned, and proceeded to Dom Antônio’s room, while the esquire, angry at not having carried out to the end the initiatory ceremony to which he attached so much value, muttered, “A low class of people!”

Loredano presented himself to Dom Antônio.

“Well?” said the nobleman.

“I accept.”

“Very well; now but one thing remains, which Ayres Gomes naturally has not told you.”

“What, cavalier?”

“That Dom Antônio de Mariz,” said the nobleman, placing his hand on the Italian’s shoulder, “is a rigorous chief to his men, but a true, loyal friend to his comrades. I am here the lord of the house and the father of the whole family, to which you now belong.”

The Italian bowed to thank him, but more than all to conceal the alteration in his countenance. Upon hearing Dom Antônio’s noble words he felt agitated; for his brain was already at work upon the plot that we saw revealed a year later.

When he left the place where he had concealed his treasure, the adventurer had gone straight to the house of Dom Antônio de Mariz and asked the hospitality that was refused to no one; his intention was to proceed to Rio de Janeiro, there to arrange the means of turning his fortune to account.

Two ideas had occurred to his mind when he found himself the possessor of the paper of Robério Dias. Should he go to Europe, and sell his secret to Phillip III or the sovereign of some powerful nation hostile to Spain? Should he take into his service a company of adventurers, and explore on his own account this fabulous treasure, which must raise him to the pinnacle of greatness? This last idea pleased him most.

Meantime he formed no positive resolution. His secret having been bestowed in a safe place, and himself relieved of that weight which made him tremble at every step, the Italian resolved, as we have said, to seek hospitality of Dom Antônio de Mariz. There he would mature his plan and mark out the road he was to follow; then he would return for the paper, and with it march to riches, fortune, power.

At the nobleman’s house the ex-Carmelite with his keenness of observation studied the situation, and found it favorable to the carrying out of an idea which soon began to take form in his mind.

Mercenaries, who sell their liberty, conscience, and life, for a salary, have a true devotion for only one object, money; their martyr, their chief, their friend, is he who pays them most. Brother Angelo knew the human heart, and therefore no sooner did he become one of the band than he formed an estimate of the character of the adventurers. “These men would serve my purpose perfectly,” said he to himself.

In the midst of these reflections a circumstance occurred that produced a complete revolution in his ideas. He saw Cecília.

The image of that beautiful girl, chaste and innocent, was to his ardent nature, long sealed as with a crust of ice by monastic life, a spark upon powder. He thought this woman as necessary to his existence as the treasure of which he dreamed; to be rich for her, to possess her to enjoy his riches, was from that time forth his only passion.

One of the adventurers was about to leave the house; Loredano solicited his place and obtained it, as we have seen; his plan was formed. What it was we already know. The Italian purposed to become chief of the band, to possess himself of Cecília, go to the hidden mines, obtain as much silver as he could carry away, proceed to Bahia, capture a Spanish ship, and make sail for Europe. There he would equip a fleet, return to Brazil, explore his treasure, draw from it immense riches, and -. And the world opened before him, full of hope and happiness.

For a year he worked upon this enterprise with sagacity and intelligence; he had gained over the two most influential men of the band, Ruy Soeiro and Bento Simões; through them he was preparing for the final issue.

There were only two persons who could ruin him. Now, Loredano was not a man to overlook the result of treason, and to put into the hands of his accomplices a weapon with which they could slay him; hence the idea of that will which he had intrusted to Dom Antônio. Only in that paper, instead of having revealed his plot, as the Italian had told Ruy Soeiro, he had merely pointed out the treason of the two adventurers, declaring that he had been seduced by them; the friar had lied therefore even in death, when the paper was to speak.

The confidence which he had in the character of Dom Antônio gave him entire peace of mind; he knew that under no circumstances would the nobleman open the will that had been placed in his keeping.

Thus lived Brother Angelo di Luca, under his new name of Loredano, in the house of Dom Antônio de Mariz, preparing for the realization at last of his constant thought. He had waited for a year, and as he said, was tired. He had resolved at last to strike the blow.

But let us not anticipate: it is still 1603, a year before he was ready to act, and we have still certain circumstances to relate that will serve as an introduction to this story.

IV. CECY.

A FEW hours after Loredano had been admitted into the house, Cecília, going to the window of her room, saw Pery on the opposite side of the declivity, looking at her with deep admiration. The poor Indian, timid and reserved, did not venture to approach the house except when he saw Dom Antônio walking on the esplanade; he was conscious that in that dwelling only the noble heart of the aged cavalier felt any esteem for him.

He had not made his appearance for four days; Dom Antônio had begun to think that he had returned with his tribe to the regions where they dwelt. The Goytacazes ruled over the entire territory between Cape St. Thomas and Cape Frio. They were a warlike people, valiant and fearless, and on different occasions had made the conquerors feel the force of their arms. They had completely destroyed the colony of Parahyba, founded by Pedro de Góes, and after a

siege of six months had in like manner laid waste the colony of Victoria, founded in Espírito Santo by Vasco Fernandes Coutinho.

Let us return from this slight historical digression to our hero.

Cecília's first movement on seeing the Indian had been one of fright; she had fled from the window mechanically. But her good heart was vexed at that fear, and told her that she had nothing to apprehend from the man who had saved her life. She remembered that it would be wrong and ungrateful to repay the devotion which he showed to her by showing the repugnance he inspired. She accordingly overcame her timidity, and resolved to make a sacrifice to the gratitude she owed to him. She went to the window, and beckoned him with her pretty white hand to approach.

The Indian, unable to restrain his joy, ran toward the house, while Cecília sought her father, and said to him:

"Pery is approaching, father; come and see him."

"Is he? Good!" said the nobleman. And in company with his daughter, Dom Antônio went to meet the Indian, who had already reached the esplanade.

Pery had in his hand a little basket, woven with extraordinary delicacy of very white straw, like lace-work; through the interstices were heard feeble chirpings, and a slight noise made by the little inhabitants of that pretty nest. He knelt at Cecília's feet; without venturing to raise his eyes, he presented to her the straw basket. Opening the lid, the girl was startled, but smiled. A swarm of humming birds was fluttering within, and some escaped. One came and nestled in her bosom; another began to hover around her fair head, as if it mistook her rosy little mouth for a flower.

She was delighted with those brilliant little birds, some scarlet, others blue and green, and all of golden luster, and exquisite and delicate forms. When she grew weary of admiring them, she took them one by one, kissed them, warmed them in her bosom, and grieved that she was not a pretty, fragrant flower, that they might kiss her too and hover constantly around her. Pery looked on, and was happy; for the first time since he had saved her life he had succeeded in doing something that brought a smile of pleasure to her lips.

Still, notwithstanding this happiness, it was easy to see that the Indian was sad; he went up to Dom Antônio and said, "Pery is going away."

"Ah!" said the nobleman. "You are going back to your country?"

"Yes; Pery returns to the land that covers the bones of Ararê."

"Ask him why he goes away and leaves us, father," said Cecília.

The nobleman translated the question.

“Because the Lady does not need Pery, and Pery must accompany his mother and brethren.”

“But if the rock threatens to injure the Lady, who will defend her?” asked the girl, smiling, and alluding to the Indian’s narrative.

Hearing the question from Dom Antônio’s lips, Pery did not know what to reply, because it reminded him of a thought that had already passed through his mind: he feared in his absence the girl would be subject to some peril, and he not be near to save her.

“If the Lady orders it, Pery will remain.”

Cecília, as soon as her father translated the Indian’s response, laughed at his blind obedience; but she was a woman, and a trace of vanity slept in her girlish heart. To see that wild soul, free as the birds that hover in the air or the rivers that coursed through the plain, that strong and vigorous nature, which performed prodigies of strength and courage, that will, untameable as the mountain torrent, prostrate at her feet, a vanquished and submissive slave! She must have been other than a woman not to have felt a pride in her control over such a nature. Women have this characteristic, that, recognizing their own weakness, their greatest ambition is to reign through the magnetism of this weakness over whatever is strong, great, and superior to themselves; they love intelligence, courage, genius, power, only to vanquish and subjugate them.

“The Lady does not wish Pery to go away,” said she, with a queenly air.

The Indian understood her perfectly.

“Pery will remain.”

“See, Cecília,” said Dom Antônio, laughing; “he obeys you!”

Cecília smiled.

“My daughter thanks you for the sacrifice, Pery,” continued the nobleman, “but neither of us wish you to abandon your tribe.”

“The Lady has ordered it,” replied the Indian.

“She wanted to see if you would obey her; she has learned your devotion, and is satisfied; she consents to your departure.”

“No!”

“But your brethren, your mother, and your free life?”

“Pery is the Lady’s slave.”

“But Pery is a warrior and a chief.”

“The Goytacaz nation has a hundred warriors powerful as Pery, a thousand bows swift. as the flight of the hawk.”

“Then you are determined to remain?”

“Yes; and as you do not wish to admit Pery to your house, a forest tree will serve for his shelter.”

“You offend me, Pery!” exclaimed the nobleman. “My door is open to all, and above all to you, who are a friend, and who rescued my daughter.”

“No, Pery means no offense; but he knows that his skin is red.”

“And his heart golden.”

While Dom Antônio was continuing his efforts to induce the Indian to depart, a monotonous chant was heard from the forest. Pery listened, and descending from the esplanade ran in the direction whence came the voice that was chanting with the sad and melancholy cadence peculiar to the Indians the following lament in the Guarany tongue: -

“The star has shone; we set out with the evening. The breeze has blown; it bears us on its wings.

“War brought us; we conquer. The war is over; we return.

“In war the warriors fight; there is blood. In peace the women work; there is wine.

“The star has shone; it is the hour of departure. The breeze has blown; it is time to go.”

The person singing this savage song was an aged Indian woman, who, leaning against a tree in the forest, had seen through the foliage the scene enacted on the esplanade. On reaching her, Pery became sad and troubled.

“Mother!” exclaimed he.

“Come!” said the woman, advancing into the woods.

“No!”

“We are ready to depart.”

“Pery remains.”

The woman looked at her son in utter astonishment. “Your brethren are going.”

Pery made no reply.

“Your mother is going.”

The same silence.

“Your country awaits you.”

“Pery remains, mother,” said he, with a voice betraying emotion.

“Why?”

“The Lady has ordered it.”

The poor mother received that word as an irrevocable sentence; she knew the control exercised over Pery’s soul by the image of Our Lady which he had seen in the midst of a fight, and had personified in Cecília. She felt that she was about to lose her son, the pride of her old age, as Ararê had been the pride of her youth. A tear trickled down her copper-colored cheek.

“Mother, take Pery’s bow; bury it near the bones of his father; and burn Ararê’s cabin.”

“No; if some day Pery returns, he will find his father’s cabin, and his mother to love him; everything will be sad till the moon of flowers brings the son of Ararê to the country where he was born.”

Pery shook his head sorrowfully: “Pery will not return!”

His mother started with a movement of terror and despair.

“The fruit that falls from the tree does not return to it again; the leaf that becomes detached from the branch withers, dries up, and dies; the wind carries it away. Pery is the leaf; you are the tree, mother. Pery will not return to your bosom.”

“The white virgin saved your mother; she should have let her die rather than rob her of her son. A mother without her son is a tract without water, which burns and kills whatever approaches it.” These words were accompanied by a threatening look, in which was revealed the ferocity of a tiger defending its young.

“Mother, do not injure the Lady; Pery would die, and at the last hour would think of you.”

Both stood some time in silence.

“Your mother will remain,” said the woman, with a tone of resolution.

“And who will be the mother of the tribe? Who will guard Pery’s cabin? Who will narrate to the children the wars of Ararê, mighty among the mightiest? Who will tell how many times the Goytacazes have set fire to the city of the white men, and conquered the men of thunder? Who will prepare the wines and drinks for the warriors, and teach the sons the customs of the fathers?” Pery uttered these words with an enthusiasm roused by the recollections of his savage life.

The woman became pensive and replied: “Your mother will return; she will await you at the door of the cabin in the shade of the jambo[25] tree; if its blossoms come without Pery, your, mother will never see the fruit.”

She placed her hands on her son’s shoulders, and rested her forehead on his, while their tears mingled.

Presently she withdrew slowly; Pery followed her with his eyes till she disappeared in the forest; he was on the point of running, calling her, and going with her. But the wind brought to his ear the silvery voice of Cecília talking with her father, and he remained.

That night he had built, on the edge of the rock, the little cabin that was to be his world.

Three months passed. Cecília, who for a moment had overcome her repugnance for the Indian when she ordered him to remain, forgot the ingratitude of the action, and no longer concealed her antipathy. When he approached her, she would utter a cry of fear and flee, or order him to retire. Pery, who already understood and spoke Portuguese, would withdraw humbly and sorrowfully. Nevertheless his devotion remained constant; he accompanied Dom Antônio on his expeditions, aided him with his experience, and guided him to deposits of gold or precious stones. Upon his return he would spend the whole day in the fields in search of a perfume, a flower, a bird, which he would deliver to the nobleman with the request that he would give it to Cecy, since he no longer ventured to approach her himself.

Cecy was the name which the Indian gave his mistress after he had learned that she was called Cecília. One day the girl, hearing him call her so, and finding a pretext for getting angry with the submissive slave who obeyed her slightest word, reproved him sharply.

“Why do you call me Cecy?”

The Indian smiled sadly.

“Can you not say Cecília?”

Pery pronounced all the syllables distinctly; this was the more to be wondered at since his language lacked four letters, of which *l* was one.

“But then,” said the girl with some curiosity, “if you know my name why do you not always say it?”

“Because Cecy is the name which Pery has in his soul.”

“Oh, it is a name of your language?”

“Yes.”

“What does it mean?”

“What Pery feels.”

“But in Portuguese?”

“Mistress must not know.”

The girl tapped her foot impatiently on the ground. Dom Antônio was passing; Cecília ran to him. “Father, tell me what *Cecy* signifies in that Indian language which you speak?”

“*Cecy*?” said the nobleman, endeavoring to recollect. “Yes! It is a verb, meaning to pain, *to grieve*.”

The girl felt a twinge of remorse; she was conscious of her ingratitude; and remembering what she owed to the Indian, and the manner in which she treated him, she thought herself wicked, selfish, and cruel.

“What a sweet word!” said she to her father. “It is like the song of a bird.”

From that day she was good to Pery. She gradually lost her fear, and began to understand that untutored soul. She no longer saw in him a slave, but a faithful and devoted friend.

“Call me Cecy,” she would sometimes say to the Indian, smiling; “that sweet name will remind me that I have been unkind to you, and teach me to be good.”

V. BASENESS.

IT is time to continue this story, interrupted to relate some antecedent events.

Let us return, then, to the place where we left Loredano and his companions, terror stricken by that unlooked-for exclamation.

The two accomplices, superstitious as were persons of the lower classes in that age, attributed the occurrence to a supernatural cause, and saw in it a warning from heaven. Loredano, however, was not a man to yield to such

weakness. He had heard a voice, and that voice, though dull and hollow, must have been the voice of a man. Who was it? Could it be Dom Antônio? or one of the adventurers? He could not tell; his mind was lost in a chaos of uncertainties.

He made a sign to Ruy Soeiro and Bento Simões to follow him, and securing in his bosom the fatal parchment, the cause of so many crimes, sprang into the plain. They had advanced perhaps a hundred yards, when they saw a cavalier crossing the path they were pursuing. The Italian recognized him immediately; it was Álvaro.

The young man was seeking the solitude to think of Cecília, and especially to reflect on a circumstance that had occurred that morning, which he could not understand. He had seen Cecília's window open, the two girls appear, exchange glances, and then Isabel fall on her knees at her cousin's feet. If he had heard what we already know, he would have understood perfectly; but, distant as he was, he could merely see without being seen by the girls.

Loredano, upon seeing the cavalier, turned to his companions. "There he is!" said he, with a look gleaming with joy. "Fools! to attribute to heaven what you cannot understand!" And he accompanied these words with a smile of deep contempt. "Wait for me here."

"What are you going to do?" asked Ruy Soeiro.

The Italian turned with surprise, and then shrugged his shoulders, as if his companion's question did not merit a reply. Ruy Soeiro, who knew the character of this man, understood the action. A remnant of magnanimity still lingering in his corrupt heart prompted him to grasp his companion's arm, to hold him back.

"Do you wish me to speak?" said Loredano.

"It is besides a useless crime!" chimed in Bento Simões.

The Italian fixed upon him his eyes, cold as the touch of polished steel. "There is one more useful, friend Simões; we will consider it at the proper time."

And without waiting for a reply, he plunged into the bushes that covered the plain at that point, and followed Álvaro, who was proceeding slowly on his way.

The young man, though absorbed in thought, had all the watchfulness that the hazardous life of our hunters in the interior, compelled to penetrate virgin forests, imparts. There man is surrounded by dangers on every side; in front, behind, on the left, on the right, in the air, on the ground, there may spring up an enemy that, concealed by the foliage, approaches unseen. The sole defense is an acuteness of hearing capable of distinguishing among the vague noises of the forest such as are not produced by the wind, coupled with a rapidity and certainty of vision able to explore the gloom of the thickets and penetrate the dense foliage of the trees. This gift of practiced hunters Álvaro

possessed; and as soon as the wind brought to his ear the sound of dry leaves crackling under foot, he raised his head and looked around the plain; then, by way of precaution, he leaned against the thick trunk of an isolated tree, and folding his arms over his carbine waited. In that position the enemy, whatever it was, beast, reptile, man, could attack him only in front.

Loredano, crouched among the leaves, had observed this movement and hesitated. But his secret was compromised; the suspicion he had entertained that it was Álvaro who a little while before had threatened him with the word, *"Traitors!"* was confirmed in his mind by the caution with which the young man avoided a surprise. The cavalier was a terrible enemy, and wielded every weapon with admirable dexterity. The Italian had reason for hesitating; but necessity urged, and he was brave and active. He advanced toward the cavalier, resolved to die, or save his life and fortune.

Álvaro frowned as he saw him approach; after what had occurred the evening before, and that morning, he hated the man, or rather despised him.

"I wager you have had the same thought as I, cavalier," said the adventurer when he got within a few steps of Álvaro.

"I don't know what you mean," replied the young man coldly.

"I mean, cavalier, that two men who hate each other meet better in a solitary place than among their companions."

"It is not hate that you inspire in me; it is contempt. It is more than contempt, it is loathing. The reptile that creeps along the ground causes me less repugnance."

"Let us not dispute about words, cavalier; it all comes to the same thing I hate you, you despise me! I could have told you as much."

"Wretch!" exclaimed the cavalier, putting his hand on the hilt of his sword. So rapid was the movement that the word had no sooner escaped from his lips than the steel blade touched the Italian's cheek. Loredano sought to avoid the insult, but there was no time.

His eyes became inflamed with rage. "Cavalier, you owe me satisfaction for the insult you have offered me."

"It is fair," answered Álvaro with dignity. "But not with the sword which is the weapon of a cavalier; draw your bandit's dagger and defend yourself."

With these words, the young man sheathed his sword with the greatest calmness, fastened it to his belt so as not to embarass his movements, and drew his dagger, an excellent Damascus blade.

The two enemies advanced toward each other and engaged. The Italian was agile and strong, and defended himself with consummate skill; yet twice already had Álvaro's dagger, grazing his neck, cut the collar of his doublet.

Suddenly Loredano sprang backward, and raised his left hand as a signal for a truce.

"Are you satisfied?" asked Álvaro.

"No, cavalier; but I think that instead of wearying ourselves uselessly here, we had better adopt a more expeditious method."

"Choose whatever weapon you please, except the sword; all others are indifferent to me."

"Still another thing: if we fight here, we may prejudice each other; for I intend to kill you, and I believe you have the same intention with respect to me. Now it is necessary that he who falls should leave no mark to betray the survivor."

"What do you propose under the circumstances?"

"The river is at hand here; you have your carbine. We will station ourselves each on a rock. The one that falls dead or merely wounded will belong to the river and the cataract; he will not inconvenience the other."

"You are right; it is better so. I should blush if Dom Antônio de Mariz knew that I had fought with a man of your class."

"Let's start at once, cavalier; we hate each other enough not to waste time in words."

Both went on in the direction of the river, whose noise was distinctly heard.

Álvaro despised his enemy too much to have the least fear of him; besides, his noble and loyal soul, incapable of the least baseness, had no thought of treachery. It did not enter his mind that a man who had challenged him to fair and open combat could be infamous enough to strike him in the back. Accordingly he continued on his way, when the Italian, letting fall his sword belt purposely, stopped an instant to pick it up and fasten it on again. What passed through his mind in that interval was not in accord with the noble ideas of the cavalier. Seeing the young man advance, he said to himself: "I need this man's life; I have it. It would be madness to let it escape and place mine in jeopardy. A duel in this desert, without witnesses, is a fight in which victory belongs to the smartest."

While saying this the Italian cocked his carbine with the utmost caution, and followed Álvaro at a distance, that the ringing of the iron, or the silence of his footsteps might not arouse the attention of the young man.

Álvaro went on tranquilly; his thought was far away, hovering around the image of Cecília, at whose side he saw Isabel's large black eyes full of melancholy languor. It was the first time that that dark face and that ardent and

voluptuous beauty had mingled in his dreams with the fair angel of his love. Whence came this? The young man could not answer; but something, almost a presentiment, told him that in that scene at the window there was between the two girls a secret, a confidence, a disclosure, and that he was that secret. Accordingly, when death was approaching, when it was already breathing upon him, and was ready to seize him, unconcerned and absorbed in thought he revolved in his mind ideas of love, and fed himself with hopes. He did not think of death; he had confidence in himself and faith in God; but if by chance some fatality should overtake him, he was consoled by the idea that Cecília, whom he had offended, would forgive him, whatever resentment she might still harbor.

With this he put his hand in his bosom and drew out the jasmin the maiden had given him, already withered from contact with his burning lips; he was about to kiss it again, when it occurred to him that the Italian might see him.

But he did not hear the adventurer's step. His first thought was that he had fled; and as cowardice is associated in noble minds with baseness, the idea of treachery presented itself. He was on the point of turning round, but did not. To exhibit any fear of that wretch was abhorrent to his pride as a cavalier; he held his head erect and went on.

He little knew that at that moment the hammer of the carbine, moved by a firm finger, was descending, and that the ball, guided by the sure sight of the Italian, was ready to speed on its way.

VI. [NOBLETY][26]

ÁLVARO heard a shrill whistling. The ball, grazing the rim of his felt hat, cut off the point of the scarlet plume that curled over his shoulder.

He turned, calm, cool, undisturbed; not a muscle of his face moved; only a smile of supreme contempt arched his upper lip, shaded by his black mustache.

The spectacle presented to his eyes caused him extreme surprise, for he certainly was not expecting to see what was actually taking place a few yards from him.

Pery, exhibiting in his movements all the muscular strength of his powerful frame, holding Loredano by the neck with his left hand, was bending him under a violent pressure and forcing him to his knees. The Italian, his face distorted and livid, and his eyes dilated, still held in his stiffened hands the smoking carbine. The Indian wrested it from him, and drawing his long knife, raised his arm to bury it in the Italian's head.

But Álvaro, who had advanced, warded off the blow, and extended his hand to the Indian.

"Let this wretch go, Pery."

“No.”

“The life of this man belongs to me; he has shot at me, it is my turn to shoot at him.”

While uttering these words he cocked his carbine and placed the muzzle on the Italian’s forehead. “You are going to die. Say your prayers.”

Pery lowered his knife, drew back a step, and waited.

Loredano made no answer; his prayer was a horrible and Satanic blasphemy; the violent palpitations of his heart beat against the parchment in his bosom, and reminded him of his treasure, which would now perhaps fall into Álvaro’s hands, and give him the riches that he himself had not been able to enjoy. Yet, under the baseness of his soul, there still lingered a certain loftiness, the pride of crime; he made no entreaty, uttered no word; feeling the cold touch of the iron he closed his eyes, and thought himself dead.

Álvaro looked at him for a moment and lowered his carbine.

“You are unworthy of death at the hands of a man and by a weapon of war; you belong to the pillory and the executioner. It would be a robbery of God’s justice.”

The Italian opened his eyes, and his countenance lighted up with a ray of hope

“You must swear to leave the house of Dom Antônio de Mariz tomorrow, and never set foot in this region again: such is the price of your life.”

“I swear!”

The young man took off the cross that he wore around his neck, and presented it to Loredano; the adventurer put his hand upon it and repeated the oath.

“Rise, and get out of my sight.” And with the same contempt for his enemy, and the same noble bearing, the cavalier uncocked his carbine: he then turned to continue his walk, making a sign to Pery to accompany him.

The Indian, while the rapid scene that we have described was taking place, was absorbed in thought.

When he heard what Loredano and his two companions said a little while before, and learned from their conversation that they purposed evil to his mistress and Dom Antônio, his first thought had been to hurl himself upon the three enemies and kill them. It was for this reason that he uttered that word that revealed his indignation; but he immediately remembered that he might die, and that in that case Cecília would have no one to defend her. For the first time in his life he felt fear; he feared for his mistress, and regretted that he had not a thousand lives, that he might sacrifice them all for her safety.

He therefore escaped from the place quickly enough not to be seen by the Italian as he ascended the tree, and going to the bank of the river washed his cotton tunic, which was stained with blood; he did not wish it known that he was wounded. While engaged in this work he formed a plan of action.

He resolved not to say any thing to any one, not even to Dom Antônio. Two reasons determined him to this course: the first was the fear of not being believed, since he had no proofs with which he could establish any charge that he, an Indian, might make against white men; the second was his confidence that he alone was enough to bring to naught the plots of the adventurers, and to contend against the Italian.

This point being established, he proceeded to the execution of his plan, which in his mind resolved itself into a punishment; those three men intended to kill, therefore they must die, and they must die at the same time, by the same blow. Pery feared that, confederated as they were, if one escaped he would be carried away by despair at seeing his companions fall, and would anticipate the accomplishment of the crime before he could prevent it. His intelligence, uncultivated, but brilliant as the sun of our country, vigorous as the vegetation of our soil, guided him in this chain of reasoning with a logic and wisdom worthy of civilized man; he took into account every hypothesis, weighed every probability, and prepared to carry out his plan with the sureness and energy that no one else possessed in so high a degree.

Proceeding accordingly toward the house, where another duty called him, - that of warning Dom Antônio of a possible attack by the Aymorés, - he had passed near Bento Simões and Ruy Soeiro, and, guided by the direction in which they were looking, saw at a distance Loredano, at the moment when he took aim at the cavalier.

To run and fall upon the Italian, turn aside his aim, and bring him to his knees, was a movement so rapid that at the very moment the two adventurers perceived it they saw their companion overpowered.

The accomplishment of Pery's design presented itself naturally, without being sought. He had the Italian in his power; after him he would proceed against the two adventurers, for whom his knife would suffice; and when all was consummated he would go to Dom Antônio and tell him: "These three men were betraying you, - I killed them; if I have done wrong, punish me."

The intervention of Álvaro, whose generosity saved Loredano's life, overthrew this plan entirely. Ignorant of the motive that led Pery to threaten the adventurer, thinking it was only to punish him for the attempt he had just perfidiously made against himself, the cavalier, to whom the taking of life unnecessarily was repugnant, contented himself with the oath, and the certainty that the Italian would leave the house.

Meantime Pery was reflecting on the possibility of bringing matters back to the same position; but he knew that he could not effect it. Álvaro had received from Dom Antônio the principles of knightly honor prevalent in the fifteenth century, which the aged nobleman cherished as the best legacy from his ancestors. Pery understood the young man's

character, and knew that, after having given Loredano his life, though he despised him, he would not consent that a hair of the adventurer's head should be touched in his presence; and that, if necessary, he would draw his sword to defend this man, who had just attempted his life. And the Indian respected Álvaro, not on his own account, but for the sake of Cecília, whom he loved. Whatever misfortune happened to the cavalier would make his mistress sad; this was enough to make the young man's person sacred, as was everything that belonged to the maiden, or was necessary to her peace and happiness.

This reflection led Pery to put his knife in his belt and accompany the cavalier, without concerning himself further about the Italian.

They went on in the direction of the house, along the bank of the river.

"I thank you again, Pery; not for saving my life, but for the respect you entertain for me." And the young man pressed the Indian's hand.

"Do not thank me; Pery did nothing; it was his mistress that saved you."

Álvaro smiled at his frankness, and blushed at the allusion contained in his words.

"If you were to die, mistress would weep, and Pery wishes his mistress to be happy."

"You are mistaken; Cecília is kindhearted, and would grieve if any evil were to happen to me, just as she would for you, or anyone else whom she is accustomed to see."

"Pery knows why he speaks thus; he has eyes that see and ears that hear. You are to his mistress the sun that gives the jambo its color, and the dew that opens the flower of night."

"Pery!" exclaimed Álvaro.

"Don't be angry," said the Indian gently. Pery loves you because you make his mistress smile. The reed, when it is by the water-side, is green and merry; when the wind passes, the leaves say *Ce-cy*. You are the river. Pery is the wind that passes softly, so as not to drown the murmur of the stream, - is the wind that bends the leaves till they touch the water."

Álvaro regarded the Indian with astonishment. Where had this uncultured savage learned a poetry so simple and yet so beautiful? Where had he imbibed that delicacy of feeling, so seldom found in hearts worn by contact with society?

The scene that was spread out before his eyes answered him; Brazilian nature, so rich and brilliant, was the image that virgin soul reproduced, as the mirror of the waters reflects the azure of the sky.

He who is acquainted with the vegetation of our country, from the delicate parasite to the gigantic cedar; who in the animal kingdom descends from the tiger and the tapir, symbols of ferocity and strength, to the pretty humming bird and the gilded insect; who observes these heavens, which pass from the purest blue to the bronzed hues that foretell the dreadful tempests; who has seen under the green carpet of flower-enameled grass that covers our plains a thousand reptiles glide, carrying death in an atom of poison, - will understand what Álvaro felt. What, in fact, does that chain express that connects the two extremes of all that constitutes life? What means strength at the zenith of power, allied to weakness with all its charms; beauty and grace succeeding to terrible dramas and repulsive monsters; horrible death side by side with brilliant life? Is not this poetry? The man who is born, rocked, and reared, in this perfumed cradle, in the midst of scenes so diverse, amid the eternal contrast of smile and tear, of flower and thorn, of honey and poison, - is not he a poet?

A poet born, he sings nature in the very language of nature; ignorant of what is passing within him, he seeks in the images he has before his eyes the expression of the vague and confused feeling that agitates his soul. His word is the one God has written with the letters that form the book of creation; it is the flower, the sky, the light, the color, the air, the sun; sublime objects which nature created smiling. His style flows like the meandering brook, or leaps like the river dashing down the cascade; at times it rises to the summit of the mountains, at others it descends and creeps like the pretty, diminutive insect.

This is what the majestic scenery in the midst of which he stood on the bank of the Paquequer said to Álvaro; but rapidly, by one of those impressions that dart upon the mind like light through space.

The young man received the frank confession of the Indian without the slightest hostile feeling; on the contrary he appreciated his devotion to Cecília.

“So, said he with a smile, you only love me because you think Cecília likes me?”

“Pery only loves what his mistress loves; because he loves only his mistress in this world; for her he left his mother, his brethren, and the land where he was born.”

“But if Cecília did not like me as you suppose?”

“Pery would do the same as the day with the night; he would pass without seeing you.”

“And if I did not love Cecília?”

“Impossible!”

“Who knows?” said the young man smiling.

“If mistress were sorrowful because of you?” exclaimed the Indian, whose black eye flashed.

“Yes: what would you do?”

“Pery would kill you.”

The resolution with which these words were spoken left not the slightest doubt of their sincerity; yet Álvaro grasped his hand with warmth.

Pery feared he had offended him. To excuse his bluntness, he said feelingly: “Listen. Pery is the child of the sun, and he would renounce the sun if it burned Cecy’s white skin. Pery loves the wind, and he would hate the wind if it disarranged a lock of Cecy’s golden hair. Pery likes to see the sky, and he would not look upward if it were bluer than Cecy’s eyes.”

“I understand you, my friend; you have dedicated your life entirely to the happiness of this girl. Do not fear that I shall ever offend you in her person. You know whether I love her: and do not be angry, Pery, if I say that your devotion is not greater than mine. Before you could kill me, I believe I should kill myself, if I had the misfortune to make Cecília unhappy.”

“You are good; Pery wishes his mistress to love you.”

He then related to Álvaro what had occurred the night before.

The young man turned pale with anger, and would have returned in search of the Italian; this time he would not have pardoned him.

“Stop!” said the Indian, “Cecy would be frightened. Pery will set this matter right.”

The two were now near the house and about to enter the enclosure at the foot of the steps, when Pery grasped Álvaro’s arm.

“The enemy of the house means mischief; defend mistress. If Pery dies, send word to his mother, and you will see all the warriors of the tribe come to fight with you and save Cecy.”

“But who is the enemy of the house?”

“Do you wish to know?”

“Certainly, how am I to fight them?”

“You shall know.”

Álvaro would have insisted, but the Indian did not give him time; he plunged again into the woods, and while the young man was ascending the steps took a turn around the house, and gained the side on which was Cecília's room.

He had come in sight of the window, when among the bushes appeared the thin, lean figure of Ayres Gomes, who was covered with nettles and prickles, and was panting violently.

The worthy esquire had struck his head against an unlucky branch, which stretched him at full length upon the turf.

Nevertheless he raised himself a little on his elbows, and cried with the full force of his lungs: "Ho! Master Indian! Dom Cazique! Hunter of live ounces! Look here!"

Pery did not turn.

VII. IN THE RAVINE.

PERY stopped to see Cecília from a distance.

Ayres Gomes rose, ran to him, and put his hand on his arm. "I've caught you at last, Dom Red-skin! Here you are! It has given me a deal of trouble!" said the esquire, panting.

"Leave me," answered the Indian, without moving.

"Leave you! Not much! After having hunted through the woods for you! A fine idea!"

Dona Lauriana, wishing to see him out of the house as soon as possible, had sent the esquire after Pery, to bring him into Dom Antônio's presence.

Ayres Gomes, faithful performer of his superior's orders, had been beating about the woods for two full hours. Every comical accident possible or imaginable had happened to him, as if on purpose. At one moment his hat roused a nest of wasps, which made him beat an honorable retreat as fast as his legs would carry him; at another, a long tailed lizard, taken unawares, wound around his legs with a violent blow. These mishaps, not to speak of nettles and briers, falls, and blows on the head, enraged the worthy esquire, and made him curse the wildness of such a country. O, to be carried back to the moors and heaths of his native land! There was good reason, then, why he did not wish to let the Indian go, - the cause of all of the tribulations through which he had passed.

Unfortunately, Pery was not of the same mind.

"Let me go, - I've told you once," exclaimed he, beginning to exhibit anger.

“Have patience, my dear little red skin! On the word of Ayres Gomes, it is not possible; and you know it. When *I* say that it is not possible, it is as if our Mother Church - What the devil was I going to say? - Woe is me! I named the Church of the devil without meaning it! What heresy! He who prates of the saints with such pagans, - Prate of the saints! Most Holy Virgin! I have lost my senses! Be silent, mouth! Chirp no more!”

While the esquire was delivering, half soliloquizing, this discourse, in which there was at least the merit of frankness, Pery was absorbed in gazing on the window. He then freed himself from the hand that held his arm, and continued on his way.

Ayres accompanied him step by step with the imperturbableness of an automaton.

“What are you going to do?” asked the Indian.

“Why, follow you, and take you back to the house; it is the order.”

“Pery is going a long distance.”

“Though you go to the world’s end, it is all the same, my son.”

The Indian turned to him with a decided movement. “Pery does not wish you to follow him.”

“As to that, Master Indian, you waste your time; no one has ever yet got the better of the son of my father, who, it is well you should know, was a fighting man.”

“Pery does not give an order twice.”

“Nor does Ayres Gomes look back when he has an order to execute.”

Pery, the man of blind devotion, recognized in the esquire the man of passive obedience. He felt that there was no way of convincing this faithful performer; so he resolved to rid himself of him by decisive means.

“Who gave you the order?”

“Dona Lauriana.”

“For what?”

“To bring you to the house.”

“Pery will go alone.”

“We shall see.”

The Indian drew his knife.

“What!” cried the esquire. “Does the conversation take that turn? If Dom Antônio had not expressly forbidden me, I would show you! But - you may kill me, but I will not stir a step.”

“Pery kills only his enemy, and you are not such. You persist, Pery binds you.”

“How? How is this?”

The Indian began to cut with the greatest coolness a long vine entwined about the branches of a tree. The esquire, half-frightened, began to get angry, and was half-inclined to rush upon him. But Dom Antônio’s order was express. He was therefore compelled to respect the Indian: the most the worthy esquire could do was to defend himself bravely.

When Pery had cut and wound around his neck some twenty yards of the vine, he sheathed his knife and turned to the esquire with a smile. Ayres Gomes drew his sword without fear, and put himself on guard according to the rules of the noble and liberal art of fencing, of which he had been master from his tenderest years.

It was an original and peculiar duel, the like of which perhaps had never occurred, - a combat in which arms contende against agility, steel against a slender osier.

“Master Cazique,” said the esquire with a scowl, “don’t be a fool; for, on the word of Ayres Gomes, if you come near I’ll spit you on my sword!”

Pery extended his under lip in derision, and began to run rapidly around him in a circle several feet in diameter, which placed him out of the reach of the sword; his endeavor was to attack his adversary behind. Ayres Gomes, leaning against a tree and compelled to turn round and round to defend his back, felt his head swim and staggered. The Indian took advantage [of][27] the movement, sprang upon him, caught him behind, seized his arms, and proceeded to bind him to the tree he had been leaning against.

When the esquire recovered from the vertigo, he found himself bound to the tree by coils of osier extending from his knees to his shoulders; the Indian had gone quietly on his way.

“You devil’s Indian! Infernal dog!” cried the worthy esquire. “You shall pay me for this, dearly too!”

Without paying the least attention to the string of opprobrious epithets with which Ayres Gomes favored him, Pery went on toward the house.

He saw Cecília, with her face leaning on her hand, looking sadly into the deep ravine beneath her window.

After the first moment of surprise when she discovered Isabel's jealousy and her own love for Álvaro, she succeeded in controlling herself. Her pride would not let her cousin see what she felt; and moreover she was kind, loved Isabel, and did not wish to grieve her. She therefore said not a single word to her of reproof or complaint; on the contrary she raised her up, kissed her tenderly, and asked her to leave her alone. "Poor Isabel," she murmured; "how she must have suffered!"

She forgot herself to think of her cousin; but the tears that started from her eyes and the sob that heaved her breast recalled her to her own suffering. A happy and attractive child that had learned only how to smile, an angel of pleasure breathing joy upon whatever surrounded her, she found an inexpressible satisfaction in weeping. When she dried her tears she suffered less, and felt relieved; she could then reflect upon what had occurred.

Love was revealed to her under a new form; until that day the affection she entertained for Álvaro was merely an attachment that caused her to blush, and a pleasure that made her smile. She had never imagined that this affection could pass beyond what it was, and produce other emotions besides blush and a smile. The exclusiveness of love, the ambition to make one's own and only one's own the object of the passion, was now for the first time revealed to her by her cousin.

She remained long in deep thought; she consulted her heart, and knew that she did not love in this way. Her affection for Álvaro could never compel her to hate her cousin, whom she regarded as a sister.

Cecília did not understand the terrible struggle between love and the other feelings of the heart, in which, almost always victorious, passion overcomes duty and reason. In her innocent simplicity she thought that she could combine perfectly the veneration in which she held her father, her respect for her mother, her affection for Álvaro, her sisterly love for her brother and Isabel, and her friendship for Pery. These feelings constituted her whole life; in their enjoyment she was happy, nor did she desire anything more. While she could kiss the hand of her father and mother, receive a caress from her brother and cousin, smile upon her cavalier, and play with her slave, existence would be for her a path of flowers.

She was frightened, therefore, at the necessity of breaking one of the golden threads that formed the woof of her innocent and happy days; pained at the thought of seeing in conflict two of the calm and serene affections of her soul. She would have one charm less in her life, one image less in her dreams, one flower less in her soul; but she would not make anyone unhappy, and least of all her cousin Isabel, who at times was so melancholy. Her other affections remained; with them Cecília thought that existence might still smile upon her. She must not become selfish.

Such thoughts could proceed only from a pure and innocent girl, with a heart like a new-formed bud that has not yet begun to open to the first ray of the sun.

These ideas were still hovering in her mind as she gazed pensively into the ravine, where the object that had affected such a change in her life had fallen.

“If I could obtain that gift,” said she to herself, “I would show Isabel how I love her, and how much I desire her happiness.”

Seeing his mistress looking sadly down the precipice, Pery comprehended a part of what was passing in her mind; without being able to conjecture how she knew that the object had fallen there, he perceived that she was troubled in consequence of it. This was enough to make him put forth every exertion to bring happiness to Cecília’s pretty face; besides which he had already promised Álvaro to *set this matter right*, as he said in his simple language.

He approached the ravine. A curtain of mosses and climbing plants spreading over the sides covered the clefts in the rock. Above was a carpet of laughing green, over which bright-colored butterflies were fluttering; below a hollow full of weeds where the light did not penetrate. From time to time there were heard from among the bushes at the bottom the hissings of serpents, the sad cries of some bird drawn on to its death by the fatal magnetism, or the striking of a rattle upon the rock. When the sun was in the zenith, as now, there might be seen among the grasses, or on the calyx of the violet bell-flower, the green eyes of a serpent, or a pretty ribbon of red and black scales entwined about a shrub.

Pery cared little for these denizens of the ravine, or for the reception they would give him in their abode; what troubled him was the fear that he should not have light enough at the bottom to discover the object of his search. He cut the branch of a tree that the colonists called from its properties *candêa* (lamp), lighted it, and with the torch began to descend.

It was only at this moment that Cecília, absorbed in thought, saw the Indian descending the slope in front of her window. She was startled, for Pery’s presence reminded her suddenly of what had occurred in the morning. It was another affection lost. Two knots loosened at the same time, two habits broken one after the other, was too much; two tears coursed down her cheeks, as if each flowed from the cords of her heart that had been so rudely shaken.

“Pery!”

The Indian raised his eyes toward her. “Are you weeping, mistress?” said he with emotion.

The girl smiled upon him, but with a smile so sad as to rend her soul.

“Do not weep, mistress!” he said entreatingly. “Pery is going to give you what you desire.”

“What I desire?”

“Yes; Pery knows.”

The maiden shook her head.

“It is there.” He pointed to the bottom of the precipice.

“Who told you?” asked she with astonishment.

“Pery’s eyes.”

“You saw it?”

“Yes.”

The Indian continued to descend.

“What are you going to do?” exclaimed Cecília with terror.

“Get what is yours.”

“Mine!” she murmured sadly.

“He gave it to you.”

“He! Who?”

“Álvaro.”

The maiden blushed; but fear repressed her embarrassment. Looking down over the precipice, she had seen a reptile gliding through the foliage and heard the confused and ill-boding murmur that came up from the abyss.

“Pery,” said she, turning pale, “do not go down; return.”

“No; Pery does not return without bringing what made you weep.”

“But you will perish!”

“Have no fear.”

“Pery,” said Cecília sternly, “your mistress commands you not to go down.”

The Indian stopped and hesitated; an order from his mistress was for him a decree of fate, to be unrelentingly carried out. He fixed on the girl a timid look. At that moment Cecília, seeing Álvaro on the edge of the esplanade near the Indian’s cabin, retired within the window, blushing. The Indian smiled.

“Pery disobeys your voice, mistress, to obey your heart.” He disappeared under the plants that covered the precipice.

Cecília uttered a cry, and leaned out of the window.

VIII. THE BRACELET.

WHAT Cecília saw as she leaned out of the window froze her with fear and horror.

On every side ascended enormous reptiles, which escaping up the slopes hastened into the forest; vipers issued from the clefts in the rocks, and venomous spiders hung by their webs from the branches of the trees. Amid the horrible concert formed by the hissing of the snakes and chirping of crickets, was heard the monotonous and mournful note of the *canan*[28] at the bottom of the ravine. The Indian had disappeared; only the reflection of his lighted torch was seen.

The maiden, pale and trembling, thought it impossible that Pery should not be dead, and already half devoured by those monsters of a thousand forms; she wept for the loss of her friend, and stammered prayers to God for a miracle to save him. At times she would close her eyes, so as not to see the dreadful picture that was spread out before her, and anon open them to peer into the abyss and descry the Indian.

Presently, one of the insects that swarmed amid the agitated foliage flew out and lighted on her shoulder. It was an omen of hope, one of those pretty green coleoptera that the popular poetry calls *lavandeira de Deus* (God's washer-woman).

The soul in supreme moments of affliction grasps the slenderest thread of hope; Cecília smiled amid her tears, and took the *lavandeira* in her fingers and caressed it. It was necessary to hope; she did hope, - took courage, and called in a weak and tremulous voice, “Pery!”

In the brief interval that followed this call she suffered a cruel anxiety. If the Indian did not answer, he was dead. But Pery said, -

“Wait, mistress.”

Yet, notwithstanding the joy these words caused her, it seemed to the girl that they were pronounced by a man in suffering; the voice when it reached her ear was dull and hoarse. “Are you wounded?” she asked anxiously.

There was no reply; a shrill cry came up from the ravine and echoed among the crags; then the note of the *canan* was heard again, and a rattlesnake passed, hissing fiercely, followed by a brood of young.

Cecília staggered, and with a mournful groan fell fainting.

When, after the lapse of a quarter of an hour, she opened her eyes, Pery stood before her; he had just arrived, and offered her with a smile a silken purse, in which was a casket of scarlet velvet.

Without noticing the jewel, Cecília, still under the influence of the horrible scene she had witnessed, grasped his hands, and asked him eagerly: "Are you not bitten, Pery? Are you not suffering? Tell me!"

The Indian looked at her in astonishment at the fear he saw depicted on her countenance.

"Were you afraid, mistress?"

"Very much!" exclaimed the girl.

"Pery is an Indian," said he, with a smile, "a son of the forest. He was born in the wilderness, among the snakes. They know Pery and respect him."

He spoke the truth; what he had just done was his everyday life in the woods; there was not the least danger in it.

The light of his torch and the note of the *canan*, which he imitated perfectly, had sufficed to drive off the venomous reptiles, which are devoured by that bird. With this simple expedient, which the savages commonly employed when traversing the forests by night, Pery had descended, and had been fortunate enough to find the purse, which he conjectured to be the object given by Álvaro, caught on the branches of a vine. He had uttered a cry of pleasure, which Cecília took for a cry of pain.

Meantime she attributed the safety of the Indian to a miracle, and considered the simple and natural act that he had done a remarkable heroism.

Her joy at seeing him free from danger, and at having Álvaro's gift in her hands, was such that she forgot everything that had passed. The casket contained a simple bracelet of pearls; but these were of the purest enamel, and handsome as only pearls can be; they clearly showed that they had been selected by Álvaro's eyes and destined for Cecília's arm.

She admired them for a moment with that fondness for display that is innate in woman. She thought the bracelet would become her; carried away with this idea she put it on her arm and showed it to Pery, who was contemplating her with self-satisfaction.

"Pery regrets one thing."

"What?"

“That he has not handsomer beads than these to give you.”

“And why do you regret this?”

“Because they would always accompany you.”

“So you would be pleased if your mistress, instead of wearing this bracelet, wore a present given by you?”

“Very much.”

“And what will *you* give me to make me look well?” asked the girl jokingly.

The Indian looked about him and became sad. He might give his life, which was of no value; but where could he, poor savage, go to find an ornament worthy of his mistress?

Cecília pitied his embarrassment. “Go get a flower, and your mistress will put it in her hair, in place of this bracelet, which she will never put on her arm.”

These last words were spoken in a resolute tone, which revealed her firmness of character. She shut the bracelet up again in the box, and remained for a moment sad and thoughtful.

Pery returned with a pretty wildflower, which he had found in the garden; it was a velvety parasite of a beautiful scarlet. The maiden fastened the flower in her hair, pleased to have gratified an innocent desire of Pery’s, who lived only to fulfill hers. She then went to her cousin’s room, concealing the velvet casket in her bosom.

Isabel had feigned an indisposition; she had not left her room after coming from Cecília’s apartment, where she had betrayed the secret of her love.

The tears which she shed were not like those of her cousin, a relief and consolation; they were hot tears, which instead of refreshing the heart burned it. At times her black eyes, still moist with weeping, would gleam with an extraordinary brilliancy, as though a mad thought were passing rapidly through her distracted mind. Then she would kneel and say a prayer, in the midst of which her tears would come anew, and bedew her cheeks.

When Cecília entered she was seated on the edge of the bed, with her eyes fixed on the window, through which a strip of sky was visible. She was beautiful in the melancholy and languor that prostrated her, heightening the harmonious lines of her graceful form.

Cecília approached without being seen and imprinted a kiss on her cousin’s dark cheek.

“I have already told you that I don’t want to see you sad.”

“Cecília!” exclaimed Isabel, starting.

“What is the matter? Do I frighten you?”

“No - but -”

“But what?”

“Nothing.”

“I know what you would say, Isabel: you thought that I cherished ill-will toward you. Confess.”

“I thought,” said the girl, stammering, “that I had rendered myself unworthy of your friendship.”

“And why? Have you done me any wrong? Are we not sisters, who ought to love each other always?”

“Cecília, what you say is not what you feel!” exclaimed Isabel, astonished at her words.

“Have I ever deceived you?” replied Cecília, grieved.

“No; pardon me; but I -” She did not continue; her look concluded the thought, and expressed the astonishment her cousin’s conduct caused her. But suddenly an idea seized on her mind. She thought that Cecília was not jealous of her, because she deemed her unworthy to merit even a look from Álvaro. This thought caused her to smile bitterly.

“So it is understood,” said Cecília with volubility, “that nothing has passed between us, is n’t it?”

“Do you wish it so?”

“Yes. Nothing has occurred. We are the same, - with a difference,” added Cecília, blushing, “that from today forward you must have no secrets from me.”

“Secrets! I had one, which is already yours,” murmured Isabel.

“Because I divined it. That is not what I want; I prefer to hear it from your own mouth. I want to console you when you are all unhappy as now, and to laugh with you when you are pleased. Shall it not be so?”

“Ah! It can never be. Do not ask an impossible thing of me, Cecília! You already know too much; do not compel me to die at your feet, of shame.”

“And why should this cause you shame? Just as you love me, can you not love another person?”

Isabel buried her face in her hands, to conceal the blush that mounted to her cheeks. Cecília, somewhat embarrassed, looked at her cousin, and understood at that moment why she herself blushed when she felt Álvaro's eyes fixed upon hers.

"Cecília," said Isabel, making a great effort, "do not make sport of me. You are kind, you love me, and do not wish to cause me pain; but do not ridicule my weakness. If you knew how I suffer!"

"I am not ridiculing you; I have already told you so. I do not wish you to suffer, and least of all on my account, - do you understand?"

"I understand, and swear that I shall know how to quiet my heart; if need be it shall cease to beat before giving you a shade of sadness."

"No," exclaimed Cecília, "you do not comprehend my meaning. This is not what I ask of you; but on the contrary, I wish you to be happy."

"Wish me to be happy?" asked Isabel, astonished.

"Yes," answered her cousin, embracing her and whispering in her ear. "I wish you to love him and me too."

Isabel rose, pale and doubting what she heard; Cecília had strength enough to smile upon her with one of her divine smiles.

"No, it is impossible! Do you want to make me mad, Cecília?"

"I want to make you happy," replied the girl, caressing her. "I want you to cast off that melancholy expression and embrace me as your sister. Do I not deserve it?"

"O, yes, my sister! You are an angel of goodness. But your sacrifice is lost; I cannot be happy, Cecília."

"Why not?"

"Because he loves you," murmured Isabel.

"Do not say so; it is false."

"It is true, indeed."

"Did he tell you so?"

"No, but I saw it before you imagined it yourself."

“Then you are mistaken, and I pray you speak to me no more of this. What matters it to me what his feelings toward me are?”

And knowing that her emotion was getting the mastery over her she turned away, but paused on the threshold.

“O! I forgot to give you something I brought for you.”

She took out the velvet casket, and opening it fastened the pearl bracelet on Isabel’s arm.

“How well they look on you! How becoming they are to your beautiful dark complexion! He will think you lovely.”

“This bracelet -” Isabel was suddenly seized with a suspicion.

Her cousin perceived it, and for the first time in her life told a lie. “My father gave it to me yesterday; he ordered a pair, one for me, and the other at my request for you. So you have no reason to refuse it; if you do I shall be angry with you.”

Isabel hung down her head.

“Do not take it off; I am going to put on mine, and we will be sisters. By-by.” And throwing a kiss to her cousin with her fingers, she ran out of the room.

The playfulness and gayety of her disposition had already driven away the gloomy impressions of the morning.

IX. THE WILL.

AT the moment when Cecília left Isabel, Dom Antônio was ascending the esplanade, absorbed by some important matter, which gave his countenance an expression still more grave than usual.

He saw his son, Dom Diogo, and Álvaro walking along the wall that ran in the rear of the house, and motioned them to approach.

The young men promptly obeyed, and accompanied the nobleman to his armory, a small room at the side of the chapel, with nothing noteworthy about it except the little door of a stairway leading to a sort of cellar that served as a magazine.

When the workmen were laying the foundations of the house they discovered a deep cavern fashioned in the rock; Dom Antônio, like a man of foresight, mindful of the necessity he should be under in the future of relying only on his own resources, took advantage of this natural vault, and made of it a depository capable of containing several

hundred-weight of powder. The nobleman had found a further important advantage in his forethought; it was the tranquility of his family, whose lives would not be subject to the carelessness of any domestic or adventurer, for no one entered his armory except when he was present.

Dom Antônio seated himself near the table, which was covered with Russia leather, and motioned to the young man to be seated by his side.

“I have something to say to you on a very serious matter, - a family matter,” said he. “I have called you to listen to me, as it is a matter that concerns you and me most of all.”

Dom Diogo bowed; Álvaro imitated him, feeling great apprehension at the nobleman’s serious and deliberate words.

“I am sixty years of age,” continued Dom Antônio. “I am old. Contact with this virgin soil of Brazil, the pure air of this wilderness, have made me young again during these last years; but Nature is reasserting her rights, and I feel my former vigor yielding to the law of creation, which decrees that whatever comes from the earth shall return to the earth again.”

The two young men were about to say some soothing word, as when we seek to disguise the truth from those whom we esteem, at the same time trying to deceive ourselves. Dom Antônio checked them with a noble gesture.

“Do not interrupt me. I am not making a complaint to you, but it is a declaration which you must receive, since it is necessary to enable you to understand what I have further to say. When for forty years we have hazarded our lives almost every day, when we have seen death a hundred times over our heads or under our feet, we can calmly contemplate the end of the journey we make in this vale of tears.”

“O, we have never doubted you, father!” exclaimed Dom Diogo. “But this is the second time in two days that you have spoken of the possibility of such a misfortune. The bare idea terrifies me! You are strong and vigorous still!”

“Certainly!” broke in Álvaro. “You have just said that Brazil has made you young again; and I add that you are still in the youth of the second life which the new world has given you.”

“Thank you, Álvaro; thank you, my son,” said Dom Antônio with a smile. “I would believe your words. Nevertheless, you will agree that it is prudent on the part of a man who is approaching the end of life to make his last will and testament.”

“Your will, father!” said Dom Diogo with blanched cheek.

“Yes, life belongs to God, and the man who thinks of the future ought to anticipate it. It is customary to entrust such affairs to a notary; but I have none here, nor do I think one necessary. A nobleman cannot better confide his last will than to two generous and loyal souls like yours. A paper may be lost, broken, burned; the heart of a cavalier who has

his sword to defend him and his duty to guide him is a living document and a faithful executor. This, then, is my will. Listen."

The two cavaliers knew by the resolution with which Dom Antônio spoke that his purpose was unalterable; they disposed themselves to listen with feelings of sadness and respect.

"I speak not of you, Dom Diogo; my fortune belongs to you as the future head of the family. I speak not of your mother, for in losing a husband she will find a devoted son. I love you both, and will bless you in my dying hour. But there are two things that I prize most in this world, two things that I must jealously guide as a sacred treasure, even after my departure from this life. These are the happiness of my daughter and the honor of my name. One was a present that I received from heaven; the other a legacy which my father left me."

The nobleman paused, and turned his eyes from Dom Diogo's sorrowful face to Álvaro, who was greatly agitated.

"To you, Dom Diogo, I transmit the legacy from my father. I am convinced that you will keep his name as pure as your soul, and will strive further to ennoble it by serving a just and holy cause. To you, Álvaro, I confide the happiness of my Cecília, and I believe that God, in sending you to me, now ten years ago, wished only to complete the gift he had already granted me."

The young men had fallen on their knees, and now kissed the nobleman's hands, who, sitting between them, embraced them both in the same look of paternal love.

"Rise, my sons; embrace each other as brothers, and listen to me further."

Dom Diogo opened his arms and clasped Álvaro to his breast: for an instant the two noble hearts beat in unison.

"What remains for me to say is difficult. It is always painful to confess a fault, even when one addresses generous souls. I have another daughter; the regard I have for my wife, and fear of causing the poor child to blush for her birth, have led me to give her in life the title of niece."

"Isabel?" exclaimed Dom Diogo.

"Yes, Isabel is my daughter. I pray you both to treat her always as such; to love her as a sister, and to surround her with so much tenderness and affection that she may be happy, and forgive me the indifference I have shown toward her, and the undesigned unhappiness I caused her mother."

The nobleman's voice became a little tremulous and agitated; it was evident that a painful recollection, which had been slumbering in his heart, had awaked.

"Poor woman!" murmured he.

He rose, walked about the room, and finally, subduing his emotion, returned to the young men.

“This is my last will. I know that you will carry it out. I do not ask an oath of you; your word is enough.”

Diogo extended his hand; Álvaro placed his on his heart. Dom Antônio, who understood what that mute promise meant, embraced them.

“Now away with your sadness; I want to see you smiling, as you see me. My ease respecting the future renews my youth for a second time, and you may have to wait a long time before carrying my will into effect, which until then must remain buried in your hearts.”

“I so understood it,” said Álvaro.

“Well, then,” replied the nobleman with a smile, “you must understand another point, -that it will perhaps devolve upon me to give effect myself to one part of my will. Do you know which?”

“That relating to my happiness,” answered the young man with a blush.

Dom Antônio pressed his hand. “I am contented and satisfied,” said the nobleman; “but I am pained at a sad duty that I have to perform. Do you know anything about Pery, Álvaro?”

“I saw him a little while ago.”

“Go and send him to me.”

The young man withdrew.

“Call your mother and sister, my son.”

Dom Diogo obeyed.

The nobleman sat down at the table and wrote on a strip of parchment, which he fastened with a silken cord and sealed with his arms.

Dona Lauriana and Cecília entered, accompanied by Dom Diogo.

“Take a seat, my wife.”

Dom Antônio had gathered his family together to give a certain solemnity to the act he was about to perform.

When Cecília entered, he whispered in her ear: “What do you want to give him?”

She comprehended at once; the extraordinary affection they had for Pery, the gratitude they lavished on him, was a sort of secret between those two hearts, which they did not wish to expose to the remarks that such sincere friendship for an Indian would cause.

“How! Do you intend to send him away, after all?” exclaimed she.

“It is necessary; I told you so.”

“Yes; but I thought that you might have changed your mind.”

“Impossible!”

“What harm does he do here?”

“You know how much I regard him; when I say that it is impossible, you must believe me.”

“Do not be angry!”

“So you do not oppose it?”

Cecília remained silent.

“If you cannot in any way reconcile yourself to it, it shall not be done; but your mother will suffer, and I shall, because I have promised her.”

“No: your word before everything, father.”

Pery appeared at the door: a vague apprehension manifested itself on his countenance, when he saw himself surrounded by the whole family. His attitude was respectful, but his bearing had the innate pride of superior organization. His large black eyes surveyed the room, and rested on the venerable countenance of the nobleman. Cecília had hidden herself behind her brother.

“Pery, do you believe that Dom Antônio de Mariz is your friend?” asked the nobleman.

“As much as a white man can be of a man of another color.”

“Do you believe that Dom Antônio de Mariz esteems you?”

“Yes; because he has said so and has shown it.”

“Do you believe that Dom Antônio de Mariz desires to repay you for what you have done for him in saving his daughter’s life?”

“If it were necessary, yes.”

“Well then, Pery, Dom Antônio de Mariz, your friend, asks you to return to your tribe.”

The Indian started. “Why do you ask this?”

“Because it is necessary, my friend.”

“Pery understands; you are tired of giving him hospitality.”

“No!”

“When Pery told you that he would remain, he asked nothing of you. His house is built of straw upon a rock; the trees of the forest give him sustenance; his garment was woven by his mother, who came to bring it to him last month: Pery costs you nothing.”

Cecília was weeping; Dom Antônio and his son were greatly moved; even Dona Lauriana seemed softened.

“Do not say that, Pery. You should never in my house have wanted the least thing, if you had not refused everything and chosen to live isolated in your cabin. Even now, tell me what you desire, what pleases you, and it is yours.”

“Why then do you send Pery away?”

Dom Antônio did not know what to say, and was forced to seek an excuse to explain his conduct to the Indian. The idea of religion, which all peoples understand, seemed to him the most appropriate.

“You know that we white men have a God, who dwells up there, whom we love, respect, and obey.”

“Yes.”

“That God is not pleased that there should live among us a man who does not adore him, and does not know him. Till now we have disobeyed him; today he commands.”

“Pery’s God, too, ordered him to remain with his mother, in his tribe, near the bones of his father; and Pery abandoned everything to follow you.”

There was a moment of silence; Dom Antônio did not know what to reply.

“Pery does not wish to become a burden to you; he only awaits the order of his mistress. Do you order Pery to go, mistress?”

Dona Lauriana, who, as soon as mention was made of religion, had returned to her old prejudice against the Indian, made a commanding gesture to her daughter.

“Yes!” stammered Cecília.

The Indian bowed his head; a tear trickled down his cheek. What he suffered it is impossible to describe; language does not know the secret of the terrible storms that sweep over a strong and vigorous soul that for the first time is overcome by grief.

X. LEAVE-TAKING.

DOM Antônio grasped Pery’s hand.

“What I owe you, Pery, can never be repaid; but I know what I owe to myself. You return to your tribe; in spite of your courage and valor, the fortune of war may be unfavorable, and you may fall into the power of one of our people. This paper will save your life and liberty; accept it in the name both of my daughter and myself.” The nobleman delivered to the Indian the parchment he had written shortly before, and turned to his son. “This paper, Dom Diogo, assures any Portuguese to whom Pery may be a prisoner that Dom Antônio de Mariz and his heirs answer for him and for his ransom, whatever it may be. It is a further bequest which I leave you to carry out, my son.”

“Be sure, father,” replied the young man, “that I shall know how to meet this debt of honor, not only out of respect to your memory, but also in compliance with my own feelings.”

“My whole family here present,” said the nobleman, addressing the Indian, “thanks you again for what you have done for it; we have all assembled to wish you a happy return to your brethren and to the country where you were born.”

Pery let his eyes rest on the countenance of each one of the persons present, as if to bid them the adieu his lips could not express.

As soon as his look met Cecília’s, he crossed the room, drawn by an irresistible force, and knelt at her feet. The maiden took from her breast a small golden cross fastened to a black ribbon, and placed it on his neck.

“When you know what this cross means, return, Pery.”

“No, mistress; from whither Pery goes no one ever returned.”

Cecília started. The Indian rose, and addressed Dom Antônio, who could not master his emotion.

“Pery is going. You command, he obeys. Before the sun leaves the earth Pery will leave your house. The sun will return tomorrow; Pery will never return. He carries death in his bosom because he has to leave today; it would be joy if his departure were at the end of the moon.”

“How so?” asked Dom Antônio. “Since it is necessary for us to part, you must feel as badly three days hence as today.”

“No,” replied he; “you are going to be attacked, tomorrow perhaps, and Pery would be with you to defend you.”

“I am going to be attacked?” exclaimed the nobleman seriously.

“Yes; you may be sure.”

“And by whom?”

“By the Aymorés.”

“And how do you know this?” asked Dom Antônio with an incredulous look.

The Indian hesitated for a moment; he was studying his reply.

“Pery knows because he saw the father and brother of the woman whom your son unintentionally killed examine the house from a distance, utter a cry of revenge, and then set out for their tribe.”

“And what did you do?”

“Pery saw them pass; and comes to warn you to prepare for them.”

The nobleman shook his head incredulously. “To believe what you say, Pery, one must be unacquainted with you; you could not look with indifference on the enemies of your mistress and me.”

The Indian smiled sadly. “They were too strong; Pery let them pass.”

Dom Antônio began to reflect; he seemed to be summoning his reminiscences, and combining certain circumstances that were impressed upon his memory. His look descending from Pery’s face had fallen on his shoulders; at first vague and absent, as of a man in deep thought, it soon began to assume fixedness, and to distinguish an almost imperceptible red point on the Indian’s cotton tunic. In proportion as his vision became certain, and the object presented itself more distinctly, the nobleman’s countenance lighted up, as if he had found the solution of a difficult problem.

“Are you wounded?” exclaimed he.

Pery started back a step; but Dom Antônio, springing to him, turned down the neck of his shirt, and took the pistols from his belt, examined them, and saw that they were unloaded. After this examination he folded his arms and surveyed the Indian with profound admiration.

“Pery,” he said, “what you have done is worthy of you; what you are now doing is the act of a nobleman. Your noble heart may beat without a blush against the heart of a Portuguese cavalier. I take you all to witness that you have seen Dom Antônio de Mariz clasp to his breast an enemy of his race and religion as his equal in nobleness of character and sentiment.”

The nobleman opened his arms and gave Pery the fraternal embrace consecrated by the customs of ancient chivalry, of which even at that time only vague traditions remained. The Indian with downcast eyes, exhibiting great emotion and embarrassment, looked like a criminal before the judge.

“Come, Pery,” said Dom Antônio, “a man ought not to lie, even to conceal his good deeds. Answer me truly.”

“Speak on.”

“Who fired two shots near the river when your mistress was bathing?”

“It was Pery.”

“Who discharged an arrow that fell near Cecília?”

“An Aymoré,” answered the Indian, shuddering.

“Why did the other arrow remain in the place where the bodies of the savages are?”

Pery made no reply.

“It is useless for you to deny it; your wound speaks. To save your mistress, you intercepted the enemies’ arrows with your body, and then killed them.”

“You know all: Pery is no longer needed; he returns to his tribe.”

He took a last look at his mistress, and proceeded toward the door.

“Pery!” exclaimed Cecília, “remain! Your mistress commands it!” Then running to her father, and smiling through her tears, she said in a supplicating tone: -

“Is it not so? He must not leave us any more. You cannot send him away after what he has done for me?”

“Yes! The house in which dwells a devoted friend like him has a guardian angel watching over the safety of all. He shall remain with us, and forever.”

Pery, trembling and palpitating with joy and hope, hung upon Dom Antônio’s lips.

“My wife,” said the nobleman, addressing Dona Lauriana with a solemn expression, “do you think that a man who for the second time has saved your daughter at the risk of his life, whose last word when dismissed by us, in spite of our ingratitude, is an act of devotion to those who disown him, - do you think that this man ought to leave the house where so many times misfortune would have entered if he had not been there?”

Dona Lauriana, her prejudices aside, was a good lady, and when her heart was touched, she knew what generous sentiments were. Her husband’s words found an echo in her soul. “No,” said she rising and taking a few steps. “Pery must remain; I now ask it of you as a favor to me, Dom Antônio. I, too, have my debt to pay.”

The Indian kissed respectfully the hand the nobleman’s wife held out to him.

Cecília clapped her hands with delight; the two cavaliers interchanged a smile, and understood each other. The son felt a certain pride in seeing his father noble, great, and generous. The father knew that his son approved his action, and would follow his example.

At this moment Ayres Gomes appeared in the doorway, and was stupefied. What he saw was for him a thing incomprehensible, an insoluble enigma for one ignorant of what had occurred. In the morning after breakfast, Dom Antônio, on approaching one of the windows, had seen a great black cloud settling down upon the bank of the Paquequer. The multitude of the vultures which formed that cloud indicated that the repast was abundant; it must be an animal of large size, or more than one. Led by the curiosity natural in a life always uniform and monotonous, the nobleman went down to the river. Near the jasmine arbor that served as Cecília’s bathing house, he found a little canoe, in which he crossed to the opposite bank. There he discovered the bodies of the two savages, whom he immediately recognized as Aymorés; he saw that they had been killed with firearms. He could think of nothing except that the savages would perhaps attack his house, and a terrible presentiment seized upon him. Dom Antônio was not superstitious; but he could not avoid a vague fear when he learned of the death that Dom Diogo had unintentionally, but imprudently, caused; this was the motive that led him to be so severe with his son. Seeing now his sinister forebodings beginning to be realized, that vague fear was redoubled. An inner voice seemed to tell him that a great misfortune was hanging over his family, and that the quiet and happy life he had led in that solitude was to be transformed into a sorrow which he could not define.

Under the influence of that involuntary movement of the soul, the nobleman returned to the house. He saw two adventurers near by, whom he ordered go at once and bury the savages, and maintain the strictest silence regarding this matter: he did not want to terrify his wife. The rest we already know. He thought that the misfortune which he

feared might fall upon his own person, and desired to make his last will so as to assure the peace of his family. Afterward Pery's warning reminded him suddenly of what he had seen; he recalled the slightest circumstances, combined them with what Isabel had told her aunt, and knew what had taken place as if he had been present. The wound the Indian had received, which had been opened by the violent emotion that he had experienced during the cruel moment when his mistress was bidding him depart, had stained his cotton tunic with an almost imperceptible point, which, however, for Dom Antônio was a ray of light.

The worthy Ayres Gomes, who after unheard-of efforts had succeeded in dragging his sword to him with his foot, and cutting the cords that held him, had good reason, then, to be astonished at what he saw. Pery kissing Dona Lauriana's hand; Cecília laughing and happy; Dom Antônio and Dom Diogo surveying the Indian with a look of gratitude, - all this at once was enough to make the esquire go mad. Indeed, as soon as he had freed himself, he had hastened to the house solely for the purpose of relating what had occurred, and asking permission of Dom Antônio to quarter the Indian, - determined, if the nobleman refused it, to leave his service, in which he had continued for thirty years; but he had an injury to avenge, and though it grieved him to leave the house Ayres Gomes was not the man to hesitate.

Dom Antônio laughed at sight of the amazed figure of the esquire; he knew that he did not like the Indian, but on this occasion he desired to reconcile all with Pery.

"Come here, my good Ayres, - my comrade for thirty years. I am sure that you, the impersonation of fidelity, will be glad to grasp the hand of a de voted friend of all my family."

Ayres Gomes was not merely amazed; he was transformed into a statue. How could he disobey Dom Antônio, who spoke to him with so much of friendship? And yet how could he grasp the hand that had injured him? If he had already left the nobleman's service he would have been free; but the order had taken him by surprise, - he could not evade it.

"Come, Ayres!"

The esquire extended his stiffened arm, and the Indian grasped his hand with a smile.

"You are a friend; Pery will not bind you again."

From these words they all gathered, in a confused way, what had taken place, and none of them could refrain from laughing.

"Cursed Indian!" muttered the esquire between his teeth. "You will always show what you are."

It was dinner-time; the bell sounded.

XI. MISCHIEVOUSNESS.

IN the afternoon of that same Sunday on which so many events had occurred, Cecília and Isabel came out of the garden with their arms around each other's waist.

Cecília gave her cousin a mischievous look, that foretold one of her playful tricks.

Isabel, still under the influence of the morning's scene, held her eyes down; it seemed to her after what had passed that everybody, and especially Álvaro, would read her secret, which she had concealed so long in the depths of her soul. Nevertheless, she felt happy; a vague and undefined hope expanded her heart, and imparted to her face an expression of joy, the ecstasy of a being that thinks itself loved.

What did she expect? She did not know; but the air seemed more fragrant, the light more brilliant; everything was rose-colored to her eye.

Cecília saw, without comprehending, that something extraordinary was going on in her cousin, and observed with admiration the irradiation of beauty that shone on her dark face.

"How beautiful you are!" said she suddenly. And drawing Isabel's cheek to her she imprinted on it a sweet kiss.

Isabel responded affectionately to her cousin's caress. "Did n't you bring your bracelet?" she exclaimed, noticing Cecília's arm.

"Why, no!" replied her cousin, with a gesture of vexation. Isabel thought this movement was caused by her cousin's forgetfulness; but the real cause was the fear Cecília felt of betraying herself.

"Let's go and get it; shall we not?"

"O, no! It would be too late, and we should lose our walk."

"Then I must take mine off; we are no longer sisters."

"It does n't matter; when we return I promise you that we will be sisters indeed." Saying this, Cecília smiled mischievously.

They had reached the front of the house. Dona Lauriana was talking with her son Dom Diogo; while Dom Antônio and Álvaro were walking up and down the esplanade in conversation with each other. Cecília went toward her father with Isabel, who on approaching the young cavalier felt her strength desert her.

“Father,” said the girl, “we want to take a walk. The evening is so beautiful! If I were to ask you and Senhor Álvaro to accompany us?”

“We should, as always, do what you ask,” answered the nobleman with gallantry; “we should execute your command.”

“Command! O no, father! Wish merely!”

“And what are the wishes of a pretty little angel like you?”

“So you will accompany us?”

“Certainly.”

“And you, Senhor Álvaro?”

“I - I obey.”

Cecília while addressing the young man could not help blushing; but overcame her agitation, and went on with her cousin to the stairway that descended into the valley.

Álvaro was sad; after his conversation with Cecília he had seen her during dinner, but she had avoided his looks, and had not even once addressed a word to him. He supposed that all this was the result of his imprudence of the previous evening; but she was so cheerful and happy that it seemed impossible she should have remembered the offense. The manner in which she treated him had more of indifference than of resentment; one would say that she had forgotten everything that had occurred. This it was that had made Álvaro sad, in spite of the happiness he had experienced when Dom Antônio called him his son; a happiness that at times seemed like an enchanting dream, destined soon to vanish.

The two girls had reached the valley, and were going on among the clusters of trees that bordered the plain forming a beautiful labyrinth. Sometimes Cecília would disengage herself from her cousin’s arm, and running along the winding path that traversed the shrubbery would conceal herself behind the foliage, and make Isabel look for her in vain for some time. When her cousin finally succeeded in finding her, they would both laugh, embrace, and continue the innocent pastime.

Once, however, Cecília allowed Dom Antônio and Álvaro to approach; she wore so naughty a look and so roguish a smile that Isabel became uneasy.

“I forgot to tell you one thing, father.”

“Yes! And what is it?”

“A secret.”

“Well, come and relate it to me.”

Cecília separated from Isabel, and going to her father took his arm.

“Have patience for an instant, Senhor Álvaro,” said she, turning. “Talk with Isabel; tell her your opinion of that pretty bracelet. Have n’t you seen it yet?” And with a smile she tripped off lightly with her father; her secret was the trick she had just played in leaving Álvaro and Isabel alone, after having thrown to them a word which must produce its effect.

The emotions of the two young people on hearing what Cecília had said, it is impossible to describe. Isabel suspected what had taken place; she knew that Cecília had deceived her, to induce her to accept Álvaro’s present, - the look her cousin had cast upon her as she turned away with her father had revealed it to her. As for Álvaro, he could make nothing of the matter, except that Cecília had given him the highest proof of her contempt and indifference; but he could not imagine the reason why she had associated Isabel in that act, which should be a secret between the two.

Left thus alone in presence of each other, they did not dare to raise their eyes. Álvaro’s were fixed on the bracelet. Isabel, trembling, felt the young man's look, and suffered as though a ring of red-hot iron encircled her pretty arm. They stood thus for a long time: finally Álvaro, desirous of an explanation, ventured to break the silence.

“What does all this mean, Dona Isabel?” asked he entreatingly.

“I don’t know. I was deceived,” stammered Isabel.

“How so?”

“Cecília made me believe that this bracelet came from her father, to induce me to take it; for if I had known -”

“That it came from my hand, you would not have accepted it?”

“Never!” exclaimed the girl with spirit.

Álvaro was surprised at the tone in which she uttered the word, as if she were taking an oath.

“Why not?” he asked after a moment.

She fixed on him her large black eyes; there was so much love and so much feeling in that earnest look that if Álvaro had understood it he would have had the answer to his question. But the cavalier understood neither the look nor the silence of Isabel; he thought there was a mystery in this matter, and desired to clear it up.

He drew near the maiden, and said to her in a soft and sad voice: -

“Pardon me, Dona Isabel; I know that I am committing an indiscretion; but what has taken place demands an explanation between us. You say that you have been deceived; I too have been deceived. Do you not think that the best way to end this matter is for us to speak frankly to each other?”

Isabel was agitated. “Speak; I am listening to you, Senhor Álvaro.”

“I need not confess to you what you have already discovered; you know the history of this bracelet, don’t you?”

“Yes,” stammered the girl.

“Tell me, then, how it passed from the place where it was to your arm. Do not think that I blame you for this, - no; I only want to know how far they are making sport of me.”

“I have already told you what I knew. Cecília deceived me.”

“And the reason she had for deceiving you, - can you not guess?”

“Can I guess!” exclaimed Isabel, checking the pulsation of her heart.

“Tell me, then. I beg and entreat!”

Álvaro had kneeled down on the ground, and taking Isabel’s hand, was imploring of her the word that would explain Cecília’s action, and reveal her reason for rejecting his gift. If he knew this reason, perhaps he could exculpate himself, - perhaps he might deserve her pardon; and therefore he urgently entreated Isabel to declare the motive that actuated Cecília.

When the maiden saw Álvaro at her feet, a suppliant, she had turned deadly pale; her heart beat with such violence that her bosom might be seen to rise and fall with the vehement and rapid palpitations; her ardent gaze fell upon the young man and fascinated him.

“Speak!” said Álvaro, “speak! You are kind; do not let me suffer in this way when a word from you can relieve and calm me.”

“And if that word should make you hate me?” stammered Isabel.

“Have no such fear; whatever the calamity you announce, it will be welcome from your lips; it is always a consolation to receive bad news from a friendly voice.”

Isabel was about to speak, but stopped in great agitation: -

“O, I cannot! It would be necessary for me to confess all!”

“And why not confess? Do I not deserve your confidence? Have n’t you a friend in me?”

“If you were -” and Isabel’s eyes sparkled.

“Finish!”

“If you were my friend, you would forgive me.”

“Forgive you, Dona Isabel! What have you done that I should forgive you!” said Álvaro, with astonishment.

The maiden was alarmed at what she had said; she covered her face.

This dialogue, lively, animated, full of reticence and hesitation on Isabel’s part, had aroused the cavalier’s curiosity; his mind was lost in a labyrinth of doubts and uncertainties. The mystery grew deeper and deeper; at first Isabel said that she had been deceived; now she gave him to understand that she was guilty. He resolved at every hazard to penetrate the enigma.

“Dona Isabel!”

She took her hands from her face; her cheeks were bathed in tears.

“Why are you weeping?” asked A1varo, with surprise.

“Do not ask me?”

“You conceal everything from me! You leave me in the same doubt! What have you done? Say!”

“Do you want to know?” asked the girl, under great excitement.

“I’ve long been imploring you to tell me!”

Álvaro had taken both her hands, and with his eyes fixed on hers, was expecting at last an answer. Isabel was white as the cambric of her dress; she felt the pressure of his hands on hers, and his breath fanning her cheeks.

“Will you forgive me?”

“Yes! But why?”

“Because -”

Isabel pronounced that word in a sort of delirium; a sudden revolution had taken place in her whole being. The deep and violent love sleeping in her soul, the passion stifled and repressed so long, had awaked, and breaking the chains that held it, rose impetuous and uncontrollable. The simple touch of the young man's hands had caused this revolution; the timid child was transformed into a passionate woman; love overflowed from her heart like a mighty torrent from its deep bed. Her cheeks were on fire; her bosom dilated; her look enveloped the young man kneeling at her feet in luminous fluids; her parted lips seemed to be waiting to pronounce the word that her soul was to bring to her lips.

Álvaro admired her; he had never seen her so beautiful. The lovely brown of her face and neck was lighted up with soft reflections, and had such charming undulations that the thought involuntarily lost itself in the graceful curves, as if to feel their touch, to repose upon their palpitating forms.

All this was in the instant while Isabel hesitated to pronounce the next word. Then she tottered, and leaning upon Álvaro's shoulder, like a faded flower upon its stalk, murmured, -

"Because - I love you!"

XII. THROUGH THE AIR.

ÁLVARO rose as if the maiden's lips had injected into his veins a drop of the subtle poison of the savages, one atom of which was enough to cause death. Pale, astounded, he fixed on her a cold and stern look; his loyal heart magnified his pure affection for Cecília to such an extent that Isabel's love seemed to him almost a crime, - at any rate, a profanation.

She, with tears in her eyes, smiled bitterly. Álvaro's rapid movement had changed their positions; now it was she that was kneeling at the cavalier's feet.

She was suffering terribly, but passion had control of her. Her long silence burned her lips; her love needed to breathe, to expand, though contempt and even hatred should afterward come and drive it back into her heart.

"You promised to forgive me!"

"I have nothing to forgive, Dona Isabel," replied the young man raising her up. "I pray you not to think of such a thing again."

“Very well! Listen to me a moment, an instant only, and I swear by my mother that you shall never hear another word from me! If you wish it, I will not even look at you; I do not need to look to see you!” She accompanied these words with a movement of sublime resignation.

“What do you wish of me?” asked he.

“I wish you to be my judge. Condemn me afterward; a sentence pronounced by you will be to me a consolation. Will you refuse me?”

Álvaro was greatly moved by these words, uttered as they were in a tone of deep despair. “You have committed no crime; you need no judge. But, if you wish a brother to console you, you have in me one, devoted and sincere.”

“A brother!” exclaimed the girl. “It would at least be an affection.”

“And a calm and serene affection, Dona Isabel.”

She made no reply; she felt the gentle reproof conveyed by those words; but she felt, also, the ardent love that filled her soul and was suffocating her.

Álvaro had recalled to mind the injunction of Dom Antônio; what at first had been merely a compassion became a sympathy. Isabel had been unfortunate from infancy; it was his duty, therefore, to console her, and to begin at once to carry out the last will of the aged nobleman, whom he loved and respected as a father.

“Do not refuse what I ask,” said he affectionately. “Accept me as your brother.”

“So it should be,” answered Isabel sadly. “Cecília calls me her sister; you should be my brother. I accept! Will you be good to me?”

“Yes, Dona Isabel.”

“Should not a brother call his sister by her name merely?” she asked timidly.

Álvaro hesitated. “Yes, Isabel.”

The maiden received that word as a supreme bliss; she fancied that the cavalier’s lips in pronouncing her name so familiarly caressed it.

“Thank you! You do not know how much good it does me to hear you call me so. One must have suffered much to find happiness in so little.”

“Tell me your griefs.”

“No: leave them to me. Perhaps some time I will tell them; now I only wish to show you that I am not so culpable as you think.”

“Culpable! Of what?”

“In liking you,” said Isabel with a blush. Álvaro became cold and reserved.

“I know that I annoy you; but it is the first and the last time. Hear me, and then chide me, as a brother his sister.”

Isabel’s voice was so soft, her look so imploring, that Álvaro could not resist.

“Speak, sister.”

“You know what I am, - a poor orphan, who lost her mother very early, and never knew her father. I have lived on the compassion of others; I do not complain, but I suffer. The daughter of two hostile races, I ought to have loved both; but my unfortunate mother made me hate one, and the contempt with which I am treated has caused me to despise the other.”

“Poor girl!” murmured Álvaro, recalling a second time Dom Antônio’s words.

“Thus isolated in the midst of all, nourishing only the bitter feelings that my mother had implanted in my heart, I felt the need of loving something. One cannot live wholly on hatred and scorn!”

“You are right, Isabel.”

“Then fortunately I have your approbation. I needed to love; I needed an affection to bind me to life. I know not how, I know not when, I began to love you; but in silence, at the bottom of my soul.” The maiden looked tenderly into Álvaro’s eyes. “This satisfied me. When I had gazed upon you hour after hour, without your perceiving it, I thought myself happy; I would withdraw with my pleasing image, and converse with it, or sleep, dreaming beautiful dreams.”

The cavalier was agitated, but did not dare to interrupt her.

“You do not know what secrets that love has that lives only on its own illusions, without a look, a word, to nourish it. The very smallest thing is a pleasure, a supreme happiness. How often have I not followed the moon’s ray as it entered through my window and gradually approached me, thinking I saw in that soft beam your countenance, and waiting tremulous with pleasure as if I were expecting you. When the ray drew near, when its satiny light fell upon me, I experienced a boundless enjoyment; I fancied that you were smiling upon me, that your hands clasped mine, that your face was leaning upon me and your lips speaking to me, -”

Isabel let her head fall upon Álvaro's shoulder; the cavalier palpitating with emotion placed his arm around her waist and pressed her to his heart; but suddenly he freed himself with an abrupt movement.

"Do not be afraid of me," said she in a melancholy tone. "I know that you cannot love me. You are noble and generous; your first love will be your last. You may listen to me without fear."

"What is there left for you to tell me?" asked Álvaro.

"The explanation that you desired."

"Ah, at last!"

Isabel then related how in spite of all her efforts to keep her secret she had betrayed herself; she related the conversation with Cecília, and the manner in which her cousin had induced her to accept the bracelet.

"Now you know all; my affection will return again into my heart, whence it would never have issued but for that fatality that caused you to address a few kind words to me. Hope, for souls that have never known her, is so deceptive and fascinating that you ought to excuse me. Forget me, brother, rather than remember me to hate me!"

"You do me an injustice, Isabel. I cannot, it is true, be other than a brother to you, but that title I feel that I deserve by the esteem and affection you inspire in me. Goodbye dear sister."

The young man pronounced these last words with great tenderness, and pressing Isabel's hand disappeared: he needed to be alone to reflect on what had taken place.

He was now convinced that Cecília did not love him and had never loved him; and this discovery was made on the very day that Dom Antônio gave him his daughter's hand! Under the weight of his grief, painful as is ever the first grief of the heart, the cavalier moved away absent-mindedly, with his head cast down; he went on at random, following the line traced by the groups of trees standing at intervals here and there upon the plain. It was almost night-fall; the pale and colorless shadow of twilight was spreading like a gauze mantle over nature; objects were losing form and color, and assuming a vague and uncertain appearance in space. The first star, plunged in the blue of heaven, shone furtively, like a maiden's eyes opening and closing on awakening. A cricket concealed in the stump of a tree began its song; it was the minstrel in sect hailing the approach of night.

Álvaro wandered along pensively, when suddenly he felt a quick breeze fanning his face; he raised his eyes, and saw in front of him a long arrow fixed in the ground, still oscillating with the impulse received from the bow.

He recoiled a step or two and placed his hand on his belt, but quickly reflecting, went up to the arrow and examined the plumage with which it was ornamented; this consisted of feathers of the *azulão*[129] on one side, and of heron feathers on the other. Blue and white were Pery's colors; they were the colors of Cecília's eyes and face. One day the

maiden, like a noble castellan of the middle ages, had amused herself by explaining to the Indian how the warriors who served a lady used to wear her colors on their arms.

“Do you give Pery your colors, mistress?” asked he.

“I have none,” answered she; “but I will assume some, if you wish it.”

“Pery begs you to.”

“Which do you think the prettiest?”

“Those of your face, and your eyes.” Cecília smiled. “Take them; I give them to you.” From that day Pery decked all his arrows with blue and white feathers; his ornaments, besides a wreath of scarlet feathers woven by his mother, were ordinarily of the same colors.

For this reason Álvaro, when he saw the plumage of the arrow, felt at ease; he knew that it came from Pery, and understood the meaning of the symbolic sentence that the Indian had sent through the air.

In fact that shaft, in Pery’s phraseology, was nothing more than a warning given in silence, and from a great distance; a letter or mute messenger, a simple interjection: “Halt!”

The young man forgot his thoughts, and remembered what Pery had told him in the morning; naturally what he had just done had relation to that mystery of which he had merely given him a hint.

He glanced through the space that stretched before him, and explored with his eyes the thickets around him, but saw nothing worthy of attention, - discovered no sign indicating the presence of the Indian. He resolved therefore to wait, and stationed himself near the arrow, folding his arms and fixing his eyes on the dark line of the forest figured on the blue horizon.

An instant after, a little arrow cleaving the air fastened itself on the top of the first, and shook it so violently as to bend the shaft. Álvaro understood that the Indian wished him to draw out the arrow, and obeyed the order.

Immediately a third fell a few steps to the right of the cavalier, and others followed a few yards apart in the same direction, until one sank in a dense grove some thirty paces from the place where he had first stopped.

It was not difficult now to understand Pery’s wish; Álvaro, who followed the arrows as they fell, and knew that they indicated the place where he was to stop, concealed himself amid the foliage as soon as he saw the last one disappear in the grove.

From there, after a little interval, he saw three figures pass almost exactly over the spot that he had just left. He could not distinguish them through the branches, but saw that they proceeded cautiously and appeared to have their pistols in their hands.

The figures moved away in the direction of the house. The cavalier was about to follow them, when the leaves parted, and Pery, gliding noiselessly as a shadow, approached him and whispered a word in his ear, -

“It is they.”

“Who?”

“The white enemies.”

“I don’t understand you.”

“Wait: Pery will return.” And the Indian disappeared again in the shades of night, which was advancing rapidly.

XIII. THE PLOT.

LET us return to the place where we left Loredano and his two companions.

The Italian, after Álvaro and Pery went away, rose, and as soon as the first emotion had passed, felt a transport of rage and despair that his enemies had escaped him. For a moment he thought of calling his accomplices and attacking the cavalier and the Indian, but the idea vanished at once; the adventurer understood the men who were following him, and knew that he could make assassins of them, but never men of energy and resolution.

Now the two enemies whom he had to combat were worthy of respect, and Loredano feared to compromise still further his cause, already sufficiently in danger. He therefore devoured his rage in silence, and began to reflect on the means of escape from the difficult position in which he found himself. In the mean time Ruy Soeiro and Bento Simões approached, apprehensive of what they had seen, and fearing any incident that might complicate the situation.

Loredano and his companions eyed each other in silence for a moment; there was in the eyes of the latter a mute and restless inquiry, which the pale and distressed face of the Italian answered perfectly.

“It was not he!” muttered the adventurer in a hoarse voice.

“How do you know?”

“If it had been, do you believe he would have left me my life?”

“True; but who was it then?”

“I don’t know; but it matters little now. Whoever it was, it is a man who knows our secret and may divulge it, if he has not already done so.”

“A man?” murmured Bento Simões, who had thus far kept silent.

“Yes; a man. Do you think it was a shadow?”

“A shadow, no; but a spirit,” said the adventurer.

The Italian smiled in derision. “Spirits have something more to do than to busy themselves with what is going on in this world. Keep your superstitions to yourself, and let us think seriously of the measures we must adopt.”

“There’s no use in your talking, Loredano; no one can convince me that there is not something supernatural in all this.”

“Will you hold your tongue, superstitious blockhead!” replied the Italian with impatience.

“Blockhead! You are the blockhead who could not see that no creature could hear our words, and no human voice issue from the earth. Come! And I will show you whether what I say is or is not the truth.” The two accompanied Bento Simões, and returned to the clump of thistles where their interview had taken place.

“Go, Ruy, and shout at the top of your voice, to see if Loredano hears a single word.” And in fact the result demonstrated what Pery had learned; that the sound of the voice enclosed in that tube-like space rose and was lost in the air, without the least word being heard at the sides. If, however, the Italian had stationed himself on the ant-hill that penetrated to the spot where they had shortly before sat, he would have had the explanation of the previous scene.

“Now,” said Bento Simões, “enter; I will shout, and you will find that the sound will pass over your head, and not issue from the earth.”

“I don’t care for that,” answered the Italian. “The other observation is enough to quiet me. The man who threatened us did not hear; he merely mistrusts.”

“Do you still insist that it is a man?”

“Listen, friend Bento Simões: there is one thing of which I have more fear than of a snake; it is a superstitious person.”

“Superstitious! Say a believer.”

“One is the same as the other. Superstitious or believing, if you speak to me again of spirits and miracles, I promise you that you shall lie here carrion for vultures.”

The adventurer turned livid; it was not the idea of death, but of the eternal punishment that, according to a religious belief, those souls suffer whose bodies remain unburied, that most terrified him.

“Have you considered?”

“Yes.”

“Do you admit that it was a man?”

“I admit everything.”

“Do you swear it?”

“I swear.”

“Upon -”

“Upon my salvation.”

The Italian let go the wretch’s arm, and he fell on his knees praying the God whom he was offending to pardon the perjury that he had committed.

Ruy Soeiro returned, and the three in silence retraced their steps, Loredano in thought, his companions in sadness.

They sat down in the shade of a tree, and there remained nearly an hour, without knowing what to do nor what they had to expect. The situation was critical; they realized that they were at one of those crises in life when a step, a movement, precipitates the man to the bottom of the abyss, or saves him from the impending death.

Loredano surveyed the situation with the boldness and energy that never forsook him in extremities. A violent struggle had taken place in this man. He now had only one passion, one incentive. It was the ardent thirst for enjoyment, - sensuality, heightened by the asceticism of the cloister and the isolation of the wilderness. Repressed from infancy, his nature had expanded vehemently in that prolific region, under the rays of a burning sun that caused his blood to boil. In the frenzy of the material instincts, two violent passions sprang up. One was the passion for

gold, - the hope of being able some day to revel in the contemplation of the fabulous treasure which, like Tantalus, he was ever ready to grasp, but which ever escaped from him. The other was the passion of love, - the fever that set his blood on fire when he saw that pure and innocent maiden, who seemed capable of inspiring only chaste affections. The struggle that at that moment was agitating him was between those two passions. Should he flee and save his treasure, but lose Cecília? Should he remain, and risk his life to satisfy his unbridled desire? Sometimes he said to himself that riches would enable him to choose from the whole world a woman to love; at others it appeared that the entire universe without Cecília would be a desert, and all the gold he was going to conquer useless.

At last he lifted up his head. His companions were awaiting a word from him as the oracle of their destiny; they prepared to listen to him.

"There are but two things to do either to return to the house, or to flee from this spot. We must decide. What do you think?"

"I think," said Bento Simões, still trembling, "that we ought to flee at once, and go day and night without stopping."

"And you, Ruy, are you of the same opinion?"

"No: to flee is to betray and ruin ourselves. Three men alone in this wilderness, compelled to avoid human beings, cannot live; we have enemies on every hand."

"What do you propose then?"

"That we return to the house, as though nothing had happened. Either we are discovered, and in that case the proofs are still wanting to condemn us; or they are ignorant of everything and we run no risk."

"You are right," said the Italian. "We must return; in that house is our fortune or our ruin. We are in a situation where we must gain all or lose all."

There was a long pause, during which Loredano reflected. "Upon how many men can you rely, Ruy?" asked he.

"Upon eight."

"And you, Bento?"

"Seven."

"Sure?"

“Ready at the first signal”

“Very well,” said the Italian, with the coolness of a general arranging his plan of battle. “Bring each of you your men tomorrow at this hour; everything must be arranged at night.”

“And now what are we going to do?” asked Bento Simões.

“We will wait till it grows dark; in the dusk of the evening we will approach the house. One of us by lot will enter first; if nothing happens, he will give the signal to the others. Thus, though one be lost, two at least will still have hope of saving themselves.”

The adventurers resolved to pass the day in the woods; game and wild fruit would afford them abundant sustenance. Toward five o’clock in the evening they would go to the house, to ascertain what was going on, and to carry their project into effect.

Before starting, Loredano loaded his carbine, ordered his companions to load theirs, and said: -

“Be assured of this. In our present difficult position, whoever is not our friend is our enemy. He may be a spy, an informer; in any event we shall have one less against us hereafter.”

The two acknowledged the justness of the remark, and followed with their weapons cocked, and with eye and ear upon the alert. But notwithstanding their watchfulness, they did not notice the agitation of the leaves and the undulation that extended through the bushes, apparently produced by the wind.

It was Pery; for a quarter of an hour he had been following them like their shadow. Upon leaving Dom Antônio he had noticed their absence, and conjecturing that they were framing some plot, he started in search of them.

Loredano and his companions had already advanced some distance when Bento Simões stopped, -

“Who shall enter first?”

“It must be decided by lot,” answered Ruy.

“How?”

“In this way,” said the Italian. “Do you see that tree? Whoever reaches it first shall be the last to enter; the last shall be the first.”

“So be it!” The three placed their weapons in their belts, and prepared for the race. Pery on hearing them had an inspiration; the adventurers were about to separate; like Loredano, he also said to himself, “The last shall be the first.”

And taking three arrows he drew his bow; he would kill the adventurers without either perceiving the death of the others.

The three started, but had not gone two yards when Bento Simões stumbled against Loredano, and fell full length upon the ground. Loredano gave vent to an oath; Bento cried pity; Ruy who was already ahead, turned, supposing something had happened. Pery's plan had been frustrated.

"Do you know," said Loredano, "that in a race he loses who falls. You will be the first, friend Bento."

The adventurer said not a word.

Pery had not abandoned the hope that fortune would offer him another favorable opportunity of carrying out his purpose; he followed them. It was then that he descried Álvaro at a distance in the direction in which the adventurers were advancing, and gave him the warning with the arrows that caused him to retire.

Upon leaving Álvaro, it was his intention to intercept the adventurers, wait for them near the stairway, and when they separated to enter the enclosure one by one, to kill them. But a fatality seemed to pursue him and to protect his enemies.

When Bento Simões, leaving his companions, entered the enclosure, Pery heard Cecília's voice in that direction. The maiden was returning from the walk with her father and cousin. The Indian's hand which had never trembled in battle fell powerless, and his bow escaped from it, merely at the thought that the arrow he was about to discharge might frighten his mistress, not to say injure her.

Bento Simões passed unharmed.

XIV. THE BALLAD.

PERY saw Loredano and Ruy Soeiro pass a little after. It was the third time that the adventurers, after being in his power, had escaped from him by a sort of fatality.

He reflected some moments, and formed a fixed resolution; he modified his plan completely. At first he had decided not to attack the three enemies in front, not because he was afraid of them, but because he feared that if he should fall, they would be able to carry out in safety their plot, of which he alone possessed the secret. He knew, however, that there was no remedy but to resort to that expedient; time was flying; at any moment the Italian might execute his design. What was wanting was to find some means, in case he should fall, of warning Dom Antônio of the danger that threatened him.

This means had already occurred to him. He sought Álvaro, who was waiting for him.

The young man had already forgotten him and was thinking of Cecília, of his shattered affection, his sweetest hope blighted and perhaps crushed forever. Sometimes also the melancholy image of Isabel was present to his mind; he remembered that she too loved and was not loved. This thought created a tie between him and the maiden; both were suffering from the same cause, both bearing the same grief and experiencing a like disappointment.

Then came the thought that it was he whom Isabel loved; unconsciously he recalled to mind her tender words, and saw again her sad smile and fiery glances softened by the languor of love. He seemed still to feel her perfumed breath, the pressure of her head upon his shoulder, the contact of her trembling hands, and the echo of the complaints murmured by her moving voice. His heart palpitated violently; he forgot himself in the contemplation of that beautiful image, to which love lent an additional charm. But suddenly he started, as if she were still near him; passed his hand over his forehead to drive away the recollections that troubled him; and turned to the indifference of Cecília and the disappointment of his hopes. When Pery arrived he was in one of those moments of weariness and dislike of life that follow great griefs.

“Tell me, Pery,” said he, “you spoke of enemies.”

“Yes,” answered the Indian.

“I want to know who they are.”

“Why?”

“To attack them.”

“But they are three.”

“So much the better.”

The Indian hesitated. “No: Pery wishes to fight alone the enemies of his mistress. If he dies you will know all; then finish what Pery will have begun.”

“Why this mystery? Can you not tell me at once who these enemies are?”

“Pery can, but does not wish to.”

“Why?”

“Because you are good and think others are so too; you will defend the culprits.”

“By no means! Speak!”

“Listen! If Pery does not make his appearance tomorrow, you will never see him again; but Pery’s soul will return to tell you their names.”

“How?“

“You will see. There are three; they mean to injure mistress, to kill her father, you, and all in the house. They have followers.”

“A revolt!” exclaimed Álvaro.

“Their chief intends to carry off Cecy, whom you love; but Pery will not permit it.” “Impossible!” said the young man with astonishment.

“Pery tells you the truth.”

“I do not believe it!”

In fact, the cavalier, attributing Pery’s suspicions to an exaggeration born of his extreme devotion to Dom Antônio’s daughter, could not credit the horrible attempt; his uprightness of heart rejected the. possibility of such a crime. The nobleman was loved and respected by all the adventurers; never during the ten years he had been with him had there occurred in the band a single act of insubordination against the person of the chief. There had been breaches of discipline, quarrels among them, attempts at desertion; but nothing more.

The Indian knew that Álvaro would doubt his statement, and therefore persisted in keeping part of the secret, fearing that the young man with his chivalric notions would take the part of the three adventurers.

“Do you doubt Pery?”

“He who makes such an accusation should prove it. You are a friend, Pery; but the others are friends too, and have the right to defend themselves.”

“When a man is about to die, do you think he will lie?” asked Pery firmly.

“What do you mean by that?”

“Pery is going to avenge his mistress; is going to part from everything he loves. If he loses his life, will you still say he is mistaken?”

Álvaro was shaken by the Indian’s words. “You had better speak to Dom Antônio.” “No. He and you are well enough to combat men who attack in front; Pery knows how to hunt the tiger in the forest, and to crush the snake when ready to make its thrust.”

“What then do you wish of me?”

“That if Pery dies you will believe what he tells you, and do what he has done; save mistress.”

“Assassinate? Never, Pery! Never shall my arm brandish steel except against steel!”

The Indian turned upon the young man a look that gleamed in the darkness.

“You do not love Cecy!”

Álvaro was agitated.

“If you loved her, you would kill your brother to free her from danger.”

“Pery, perhaps you will not understand what I am going to say to you. I would give my life without hesitation for Cecília; but my honor belongs to God and to the memory of my father.”

The two men regarded each other for a moment in silence. Both had the same greatness of soul and the same nobleness of sentiment; yet differing conditions of life had created in them a contrast. In Álvaro, honor and a chivalric spirit controlled every action; neither affection nor interest could swerve him from the unvarying path he had marked out, the path of duty. In Pery devotion outweighed every other sentiment. To live for his mistress, to create around her a sort of human Providence, constituted his life; he would have sacrificed the world, had it been possible, if only, like the Noah of the Indians, he could have saved a palm tree in which to shelter Cecília.

Yet these two characters, one the child of civilization, the other the child of savage freedom, though separated by an immense distance, understood each other. Fate had marked out for them a different road, but God had implanted in their souls the same germ of heroism, - nourisher of noble sentiments. Pery knew that Álvaro would not yield; Álvaro knew that Pery, notwithstanding his refusal, would carry out to the letter what he had resolved.

The Indian at first seemed moved by the obstinacy of the cavalier; but at length standing proudly erect, and striking his hand upon his broad and powerful breast, he said in a determined tone: -

“Pery alone will defend his mistress; he needs no one. He is brave; he has, like the swallow, the wings of his arrows; like the rattlesnake, the poison of his bolts; like the tiger, the strength of his arm; like the ostrich, the fleetness of his running. He can die only once; but one life will suffice him.”

“Well then, my friend,” said the cavalier in a noble spirit, “go and carry out your sacrifice; I will fulfill my duty. I too have one life and my sword. I will make the one Cecília’s shadow; with the other I will trace around her a circle of steel. You may rest assured that the enemies who pass over your body will find mine before reaching your mistress.”

“You are a great man; you might have been born in the wilderness and be king of the forest; Pery would then call you brother.” They grasped each other’s hands and proceeded toward the house. On the way Álvaro recollected that he did not yet know the men against whom he was to defend Cecília, and asked their names. Pery refused peremptorily, but promised that the cavalier should know when the time came.

The Indian had his own idea.

Upon reaching the house they separated. Álvaro sought his room; Pery proceeded to Cecília’s garden.

It was then eight o’clock in the evening. The family was at supper; Cecília’s room was in darkness. Pery examined the surroundings, to see if everything was quiet and safe, and sat down on a bench in the garden.

Half an hour afterward a light appeared in the window, and the door opening revealed Cecília’s graceful form standing in the doorway.

Descrying the Indian, she ran to him.

“My poor Pery,” said she, “you suffered severely today, did n’t you? And you thought your mistress very cruel and very ungrateful because she ordered you to depart; but now father has said you shall remain with us forever.”

“You are kind, mistress. You wept when Pery was about to depart; you begged that he might remain.”

“Then you do not complain of Cecy?” said the girl with a smile.

“Can the slave complain of his mistress?” answered he artlessly.

“But you are not a slave!” replied Cecília with a gesture of contradiction. “You are a true and devoted friend. Twice you have saved my life; you perform impossibilities to make me contented and happy; every day you face death for my sake.”

The Indian smiled.

“What would you have Pery do with his life, mistress?”

“I wish him to esteem his mistress and obey her, and learn what she shall teach him, that he may be a cavalier like my brother, Dom Diogo, and Senhor Álvaro.”

Pery shook his head. “Come,” continued she, “Cecy will teach you to know the Lord of heaven, and to pray, and read pretty stories. When you know all this, she will embroider a silk mantle for you, and you shall have a sword, and a cross on your breast. Do you consent?”

“The plant needs sun for its growth, the flower needs water in order to open; Pery needs liberty to live.”

“But you will be free and noble like my father!”

“No. The bird that flies in the air falls if its wings are broken; the fish that swims in the river dies if it is thrown on shore; Pery will be like the bird and like the fish, if you clip his wings and take him from the life in which he was born.”

Cecília stamped her foot impatiently.

“Don’t be angry, mistress.”

“Will you not do what Cecy asks? Then Cecy will not like you any more, nor call you any more her friend. See; I do not keep the flower you gave me.” And the pretty girl, crushing the flower that she tore from her, ran to her room and closed the door with violence.

The Indian turned to his cabin with a heavy heart. All at once the silence of the night was broken by a silvery voice, singing with feeling and a charming expression an old Portuguese ballad. The sweet tones of a Spanish guitar formed the accompaniment.

The ballad ran thus: -

Upon a day a Moorish knight,

From out

His fortress silver-dight,

Mounting his trusty steed, did ride,

Without

Esquire or page at side.

He reached a castle's barbican,

And saw

The lovely castellan.

At feet of her whom he adored,

He swore

To be a faithful lord.

The noble lady sweetly smiled;

Her heart

He found not unbeguiled.

"A Moor may not a Christian wed,"

The castle's

Lovely mistress said.

"A Moor, my love thou dost command;

Thou shalt,

A Christian, have my hand.",

Enchantment in her voice there seemed,

Her look

A soft entreaty beamed.

“A king I was ere thee I spied;

Henceforth

Thy humble slave I bide.

“For thee my fortress I desert,

I leave

My palace gold-begirt.

“I give up paradise for thee;

My heaven

Thy winning smile shall be.”

The lady in confusion sweet

Her beads

Drew from her breast’s retreat.

A kiss upon the cross impressed,

Two souls

Akin in Christ confessed.

The soft, sweet voice was lost in the silence of the wilderness; echo repeated for a moment its pleasing modulations.

PART THIRD:

THE AYMORÉS

I. THE DEPARTURE.

MONDAY morning at six o'clock Dom Antônio called his son. He had been up a good part of the night, writing, and considering the perils that threatened his family. Pery had related to him the particulars of his encounter with the Aymorés, and the nobleman, knowing the ferocity and vindictive character of that savage tribe, was expecting every moment to be attacked. Accordingly, in concert with Álvaro, Dom Diogo, and his esquire, Ayres Gomes, he had taken every precaution that the situation and his long experience suggested.

When his son entered, he had just finished sealing two letters, which he had written the evening before.

"My son," said he, with some emotion, "I have been deliberating during the night upon what may happen to us, and have concluded that you must set out this very day for São Sebastião."

"Impossible, sir! Would you send me away just when you are threatened with danger?"

"Yes! It is precisely when a great danger is hanging over us, that I, the head of the house, consider it my duty to save the representative of my name, and my legitimate heir, the protector of my orphaned family."

"I have faith, father, that your fears will prove groundless but if Providence has decreed that we shall be subjected to such a trial, the only place that befits your son, and the heir of your name, is in this house, at your side, to defend you and share your fate, whatever it may be."

Dom Antônio clasped his son to his breast. "I acknowledge you; you are my son; it is my young blood that flows in your veins, my youthful heart that speaks through your lips. But let the fifty years of experience that since then have passed over my whitened head teach you what lies between youth and age, what separates the ardent cavalier from the father of a family."

"I will listen to you, sir; but by the love I cherish for you, spare me the pain and disgrace of leaving you at the moment when you most need a faithful and devoted attendant."

The nobleman, now calm, proceeded: "It is not one sword more, Dom Diogo, that will give us the victory, though it be as valiant and powerful as yours. Among forty combatants who are to contend against perhaps hundreds and hundreds of enemies, one more or less will not affect the result."

"Be it so," replied the cavalier in a determined manner; "I claim my post of honor, and my share in the peril; I may not aid you to conquer, but I can die by the side of my friends."

"And for this noble but barren pride would you sacrifice the only means of safety that perchance will be left us, if, as I fear, my apprehensions are realized?"

“What do you mean?”

“Whatever may be the force and number of the enemy, I rely upon Portuguese valor and the strength of this position to enable me to hold out for some time, for twenty days, even for a month; but finally we shall have to yield.”

“Then?” exclaimed Dom Diogo, growing pale.

“Then if my son Dom Diogo, instead of unwisely and obstinately remaining here, shall have gone to Rio de Janeiro, and asked the aid that Portuguese noble men will certainly not refuse, he will be able to fly to the succor of his father and arrive in time to defend his family. He will then see that the glory of being the savior of his house outweighs the honor of a useless hazard.”

Dom Diogo knelt down and tenderly kissed his father’s hand.

“Pardon me, father, for not having understood you. I should have known that Dom Antônio de Mariz could not propose to his son anything unworthy of such a father.”

“Come, Dom Diogo, there is no time to lose. Remember that every hour, every minute of delay, will be anxiously counted by those who await you.”

“I will start this instant,” said the cavalier, going toward the door.

“Here; this letter is for Martim de Sá, Governor of this captaincy, and this is for my brother-in-law and your uncle, Crispim Tenreiro, a valiant nobleman, who will spare you the labor of seeking defenders for your family. Go and take leave of your mother and sisters; I will have everything made ready for your departure.”

The nobleman, repressing his emotion, left the room in which this scene occurred, and sought Álvaro, who was looking for him.

“Álvaro, select four men to accompany Dom Diogo to Rio de Janeiro.”

“Is Dom Diogo going away?” asked the young man with astonishment.

“Yes: the reasons I will give you hereafter, but now make haste and have everything ready within an hour.”

Álvaro went immediately to the rear of the house, where the adventurers lived. Here there was a great agitation; some were talking in a tone of complaint, others merely muttering disconnected words, and others again laughing and jeering at the discontent of their comrades. Ayres Gomes was pacing up and down in all his martial array, his hand on the hilt of his sword, his head aloft, his mustache curled. When he came near, the adventurers would lower their voices, but as he moved away each one gave free course to his ill-humor. Among the most rest less and

turbulent might be distinguished three groups led by characters of our acquaintance: Loredano, Ruy Soeiro, and Bento Simões.

The cause of this nearly general discontent was as follows: -

About six o'clock Ruy, pursuant to the appointment of the previous evening, had proceeded to the steps for the purpose of descending into the forest. When he reached the border of the esplanade he was astonished to see there Vasco Affonso and Martim Vaz on guard, an extraordinary circumstance, since such a precaution was customary only at night, and ceased with the dawn. But his astonishment was still greater when the two adventurers, crossing their swords, uttered almost at the same time the words, "No passing."

"Why not?"

"Such are our orders," answered Martim Vaz.

Ruy turned pale and started back in haste; his first thought was that they had been betrayed, and he sought to warn Loredano. But Ayres Gomes intercepted him, and proceeded with him to the courtyard. There the worthy esquire, striking an attitude and placing his hand like a trumpet to his mouth, cried: -

"Ho - Forward all!"

The adventurers advanced and formed a circle around him. Ruy had already found opportunity to whisper a word in the Italian's ear, and both, somewhat pale but resolute, awaited the termination of the scene.

"Dom Antônio de Mariz," said the esquire, "through my agency, makes known to you his will, and orders that no one stir a step from the house without his order. Whoever disobeys shall suffer death."

A sullen silence greeted the announcement of this order. Loredano exchanged a hasty glance with his two accomplices.

"Do you understand?" said Ayres Gomes.

"What neither I nor my comrades understand is the reason of this," retorted the Italian, advancing a step.

"Yes; the reason!" exclaimed in chorus the majority of the adventurers.

"Orders are to be obeyed and not discussed," replied the esquire with an air of solemnity.

"Yet we -" continued Loredano.

“Disperse!” cried Ayres Gomes. “Whoever is dissatisfied, let him speak to Dom Antônio de Mariz.” And the esquire with the utmost unconcern broke the circle, and began to pace up and down the yard, casting sidelong glances at the adventurers, and laughing in his sleeve at their disappointment.

Nearly all were dissatisfied. Not to mention the conspirators, who had made an appointment to arrange the plan of their campaign, the rest, whose amusement was hunting and roaming in the woods, did not receive the order with pleasure. Only a few, of greater good nature and more jovial disposition, took the matter in good part, and laughed at the dissatisfaction of their comrades.

When Álvaro approached all eyes were turned to him, expecting an explanation.

“Cavalier“, said Ayres Gomes, “I have just announced the order that no one shall quit the house.”

“Very well,” replied the young man, and continued, addressing the adventurers, “the measure is necessary, my friends; we are threatened with an attack by the savages and every precaution on such occasions is at best weak. It is not alone our lives that we have to defend, -they are of little worth to any of us, - but the person of him who confides in our zeal and courage, and above all the safety of a family which we all honor and esteem.”

The cavalier’s noble words and kindly manner calmed them completely; all discontent vanished at once. Loredano alone was desperate at being obliged to delay the preparation of his scheme; for it was hazardous to attempt it where the slightest act might betray him.

Álvaro exchanged a few words with Ayres Gomes, and turned to the adventurers.

“Dom Antônio de Mariz needs four devoted men to accompany his son Dom Diogo to the city of Sao Sebastião. It is a perilous expedition; four men in this wilderness are constantly surrounded by dangers. Which of you will undertake it?”

Twenty men stepped forward; the cavalier chose three of them.

“You will be the fourth, Loredano.”

The Italian, who had concealed himself among his comrades, stood as if thunderstruck by these words. To leave the house then was to destroy forever his fondest hope; during his absence all might be discovered.

“It grieves me to be obliged to decline the service you ask of me; but I feel sick and without strength to make a journey.”

The cavalier smiled. “No illness can prevent a man from doing his duty, least of all a brave and devoted man like you, Loredano.” Then he lowered his voice so as not to be heard by the others. “If you do not go, you will be shot in an hour. You forget that I have your life in my hand, and only from compassion allow you to leave the house.”

The Italian knew that there was no help but to go; it was enough that the young man should accuse him of having shot at him; Álvaro’s word would be enough to convict him in the estimation of the chief and of his own comrades.

“Make haste,” said the cavalier to the four adventurers whom he had chosen; “you start in half an hour.”

Álvaro retired. Loredano was for a moment cast down by the fatality that weighed upon him, but gradually he recovered his self-command, and finally smiled. To produce that smile, some infernal inspiration must have come up from the center of the earth to that mind devoted to crime. He nodded to Ruy Soeiro, and the two proceeded to a room that the Italian occupied at the end of the esplanade. There they conversed for some time, rapidly and in a low voice.

They were interrupted by Ayres Gomes, who knocked on the door with his sword:

“Ho! Loredano. To horse, man, and a prosperous journey to you.”

The Italian opened the door and started out, but turned to say to Ruy Soeiro: “Look to the men on guard; it is the chief thing.”

“Be at ease.”

A few minutes afterward Dom Diogo, with heavy heart and tearful eyes, clasped his loved mother in his arms, Cecília whom he adored, and Isabel whom also he now loved as a sister. Then disengaging himself with an effort, he proceeded hurriedly to the steps and descended into the valley. There he received his father’s blessing, and embracing Álvaro, leaped upon his horse, which Ayres Gomes was holding by the rein.

The little cavalcade started, and a turn in the road soon concealed it from view.

II. THE PREPARATIONS.

AT the time when Dom Antônio and his son were conversing in the armory Pery was examining his weapons. He loaded his pistols, which his mistress had given him the evening before, and left his cabin. His features wore an expression of determination and daring that betokened a violent, perhaps desperate, resolution.

What he was going to do he did not even know himself. Certain that the Italian and his accomplices intended to meet again that morning, he hoped before the meeting was effected to have changed entirely the face of things. He had only one life, as he had said, but that, with his activity and his strength and courage, was worth many. Tranquil as to the future through Álvaro's promise, he cared not for the number of his enemies; he might die, but he expected to leave little, or perhaps nothing, for the cavalier to do.

He entered the garden. Cecília was seated on a carpet of skins spread upon the grass, and was fondling in her bosom her pet dove, offering her lips of carmine to the caresses of its delicate beak. She was pensive; a gentle melancholy banished from her countenance its natural vivacity.

"You are angry with Pery, mistress?"

"No," answered the girl, fixing on him her large blue eyes. "You could not do what I asked; your mistress became sad." She spoke the truth with the frankness of innocence. The evening before, when she retired to her room in displeasure at Pery's refusal, she was under the influence of disappointment. Educated in the religious fervor of her mother, although without her prejudices, which the reason of Dom Antônio had corrected in the mind of his daughter, Cecília cherished the Christian faith in all its purity and holiness. Therefore she was grieved at the thought that Pery, for whom she entertained a deep friendship, was doing nothing to save his soul and did not know the good and compassionate God to whom she addressed her prayers. She knew that e reason why her mother and the others despised him was his paganism, and in her gratitude she wished to elevate her friend, and make him worthy of the esteem of all. She wished to repay him for protecting her from so many dangers by saving his soul, and because he refused became sad.

In this frame of mind her eye fell on the Spanish guitar upon the bureau, and the spirit of song came over her. How strange the inspiration of melancholy! Whether from a necessity for expression, or because music and poetry sweeten pain, every creature, when sad, finds in song a supreme consolation. The maiden drew light prelusive strains from the instrument while running over in memory the words of several songs that her mother had taught her. The one that naturally pleased her best was the ballad we have heard; there was in this composition something she could not explain that accorded with her thoughts. When she had finished singing she rose, picked up Pery's flower, which she had thrown down, placed it in her hair, and saying her nightly prayer, went peacefully to sleep. Her last thought was a vow of gratitude for the friend who that morning had saved her life. Then a smile flitted across her pretty face, as if her soul during the sleep of her eyes were at play upon her half-opened lips.

The Indian, when he heard Cecília's words, felt that for the first time he had caused his mistress a real pain.

"You did not understand Pery, mistress; Pery asked you to leave him in the life in which he was born, because he needs that life to serve you."

“How? I don’t understand you.”

“Pery, a savage, is the first among his people; he has only one law, one religion, his mistress: Pery, a Christian, will be last in your communion; he will be a slave, and will not be able to defend you.”

“A slave! No! You shall be a friend. I swear it!” exclaimed the girl with spirit.

The Indian smiled. “If Pery were a Christian, and a man should attempt to injure you, he could not kill him because your God commands that one man shall not kill another. Pery, a savage, respects no one; whoever injures his mistress is his enemy, and dies.”

Cecília, pale with emotion, looked up on him with astonishment, not so much at his sublime devotion as at his reasoning; she knew nothing of the conversation he had had the evening before with Álvaro.

“Pery disobeyed you for your sake alone; when you are no longer in peril he will kneel at your feet, and kiss the cross you gave him. Do not be angry!”

“My God!” murmured Cecília, raising her eyes to heaven; “is it possible that such devotion is not inspired by thy holy religion?” The calm, sweet joy of her soul was reflected on her charming face.

“I knew that you would not refuse me what I asked of you. I ask nothing further now; I wait. Only remember that on the day when you become a Christian your mistress will esteem you still more.”

“You are no longer unhappy?”

“No; I am now satisfied, well satisfied.”

“Pery wants to ask something of you.”

“Well, what is it?”

“Pery wants you to mark a paper for him.”

“Mark a paper?”

“Like that which your father gave to Pery today.”

“Oh, you want me to write?”

“Yes.”

“What?”

“Pery will tell you.”

“Wait.”

The maiden ran lightly to her desk, and taking a sheet of paper and a pen made a sign for Pery to approach. Ought she not to satisfy his desires, as he gratified her smallest whim? “Come, tell me what to write.”

“’Pery to Álvaro,’” said the Indian.

“Is it a letter to Senhor Álvaro?” asked the maiden with a blush.

“Yes; it is to him.”

“What are you going to say to him?”

“Write.”

The maiden traced the first line, and then, at the request of Pery, the names of Loredano and his two accomplices.

“Now,” said the Indian, “close it.”

Cecília sealed the letter.

“Deliver it this evening; not before.”

“But what does this mean?” asked Cecília, not understanding it.

“He will tell you.”

“No; because I -”

The maiden stammered and blushed at these words; she was about to say that she could not speak to the cavalier, but changed her mind; she did not wish to let Pery know what had passed. She knew that if he suspected the scene of the previous evening he would hate Isabel and Álvaro, merely for having caused her an involuntary pain.

While she was seeking to disguise her embarrassment, Pery kept his keen eye fixed upon her; she little thought that in that look he was saying his last farewell. To understand that, she must have divined the desperate plan that he had formed of exterminating on that day all the enemies of the house.

Dom Diogo at that moment entered his sister’s apartment; he came to take leave of her.

Pery, leaving Cecília, proceeded to the steps, and found the same men on guard who afterward prevented Ruy Soeiro from passing out.

“No passing!” said the adventurers, crossing their swords.

The Indian shrugged his shoulders contemptuously, and before the sentinels recovered from their surprise, had dived under the swords and descended the steps. He then proceeded into the woods, examined his weapons anew, and waited; he had grown tired when he saw the little cavalcade pass.

He did not understand the meaning of it, but knew that his plan had proved abortive. He sought Álvaro.

The cavalier explained to him how he had taken advantage of Dom Diogo’s journey to Rio de Janeiro to get rid of the Italian without noise and without scandal. Then the Indian in his turn related to the young man what he had heard at the clump of thistles, the design he had formed of killing the adventurers that morning, and finally the letter he had written him through Cecília’s agency, to inform him, in case he himself should fall, who were the enemies.

Álvaro hesitated still to credit such perfidy on the part of the Italian.

“Now,” concluded Pery, “it is necessary that the other two should go also; if they remain Loredano may return.”

“He will not dare!” said the cavalier.

“Pery is not mistaken; send them away.”

“Be easy. I will speak with Dom Antônio.”

The rest of the day passed quietly, but sadness had entered that house, only the evening before so cheerful and happy; the departure of Dom Diogo, the vague fear that approaching danger produces, and the apprehension of an attack by the savages, engrossed the dwellers on the Paquequer.

The adventurers, under the direction of Dom Antônio, constructed works of defense to render still more inaccessible the rock on which the house was situated. Some built palisades around the esplanade; others dragged to the front of the house a culverin, which the nobleman in excess of caution had ordered from São Sebastião two years be fore. The whole house, in short, presented a martial appearance, indicating the eve of a battle; Dom Antônio was preparing to receive the enemy worthily.

In that whole house only one person kept aloof from these proceedings; that was Isabel, who thought only of her love.

After her confession, torn violently from her heart by an irresistible force, by an impulse she could not explain, the poor child, when she found herself alone in her room at night, almost died of shame. She remembered her words, and asked herself how she had the courage to say what before not even her eyes ventured to express in silence. It

seemed to her that it would be impossible to see Álvaro again without his every look burning her cheeks and compelling her to hide her face in shame.

Meantime her love was none the less ardent; on the contrary, it was now that her passion, too long repressed, was aggravated by its struggles and oppositions. The few sweet words that the young man had addressed to her, the pressure of his hands, and the ecstatic moment when he clasped her to his heart, passed and repassed in her memory at every instant. Her thoughts, like a butterfly around a flower, fluttered constantly around these still vivid recollections, as if to sip all the honey contained in those sensations, the first of her unhappy love.

That very afternoon Álvaro and Isabel met on the esplanade. Both colored. Álvaro was about to retire.

“Senhor Álvaro,” stammered the maiden with agitation.

“What do you wish of me, Dona Isabel?” asked he with embarrassment.

“I forgot to return to you yesterday what does not belong to me.”

“Is it that unlucky bracelet again?”

“Yes,” answered she gently; “it is that unlucky bracelet. Cecília persists that it is yours.”

“If it is mine, I beg you to accept it.”

“No, Senhor Álvaro, I have no right to accept it.”

“Has not a sister the right to accept a gift from her brother?”

“You are right,” answered Isabel with a sigh, “I will keep it as a memento of you; it will not be an ornament for me but a relic.”

The young man made no reply; he retired, in order to end the conversation. He had not been able to free himself from the powerful impression that Isabel’s passion had made upon him; he would have been other than a man not to be deeply moved by the ardent love of a pretty woman, and by the burning words, impregnated with perfume and sentiment, that fell from Isabel’s lips. But his sense of right thrust away that impression into the recesses of his heart; he did not belong to himself; he had accepted the legacy of Dom Antônio, and sworn to give his hand to Cecília. Although he no longer expected to realize his golden dream, he considered himself rigidly bound to comply with the wishes of the nobleman, to protect his daughter, to devote his life to her. When Cecília openly rejected him, and Dom Antônio absolved him from his promise, then his heart would be free, if he were not already dead from the disappointment.

The only noteworthy occurrence of the day was the arrival of six adventurers from the neighborhood, who, warned by Dom Diogo, came to offer their services to Dom Antônio. They arrived at dusk. At their head came Master Nunes, who a year before had given hospitality in his inn to Brother Angelo di Lucca.

III. WORM AND FLOWER.

IT was eleven o'clock at night. Silence reigned in the dwelling and its surroundings; everything was peaceful and quiet. A few stars were twinkling in the heavens; the low whisperings of the breeze murmured in the foliage.

The two men on watch, resting on their arquebuses, leaned over the precipice, and peered into the deep shadow that surrounded the rock.

The majestic figure of Dom Antônio passed slowly across the esplanade, and disappeared around the corner of the house. The nobleman was making his nightly round, like a general on the eve of battle.

After the lapse of a few moments the note of an owl was heard in the valley near the stone steps; one of the watchmen bent down, and picking up two small stones, let them fall, one after the other. The slight sound produced by the fall of the stones into the grove on the plain was almost imperceptible; it would have been difficult to distinguish it from the noise of the wind amid the leaves.

An instant after a figure quickly ascended the steps, and joined the two men who formed the guard of the night. "Is everything ready?"

"We are only waiting for you."

"Come; there's no time to lose."

These words having been hastily exchanged between the new comer and one of the guards, the three proceeded with every precaution to the porch, in which lived the band of adventurers.

There, as in the rest of the house, everything was calm and peaceful; nothing was visible but the rays of a light on the threshold of Ayres Gomes's room.

One of the three entered, and creeping stealthily along the wall was lost in the obscurity of the interior.

The others proceeded to the extremity of the house, and there, hidden behind a large pillar, began a short and rapid dialogue.

“How many are there of them?” asked the new-comer.

“Twenty in all.”

“We have?”

“Nineteen.”

“Good. The watchword?”

“Silver.”

“And the fire?”

“Ready.”

“Where?”

“At the four corners.”

“How many supernumeraries are there?”

“Only two.”

“We must represent them.”

“Do you need me?”

“Yes.”

There was a short pause, during which one of the adventurers seemed to be reflecting profoundly, while the other was waiting; at last the former raised his head.

“Ruy, you are devoted to me?”

“I have given you proof of it.”

“I need a faithful friend.”

“Count on me.”

“Thank you.”

The unknown grasped his companion’s hand.

“You know that I love a woman?”

“You have told me so.”

“Do you know it is more for this woman than for that fabulous treasure that I have formed this horrible plot?”

“No; I did not know it.”

“Well, it is so. Riches are of little consequence to me, - be my friend, serve me loyally, and you shall have the greater part of my treasure.”

“Speak; what do you want me to do?”

“An oath; a sacred, terrible oath.”

“What sort of an oath? Tell me at once.”

“Today this woman will belong to me; but if by any chance I fall, I wish -” the unknown hesitated - “that no man may be able to love her, - that no man may be able to enjoy the supreme happiness she can bestow.”

“But how prevent this?”

“By killing her!”

Ruy felt a cold shudder run through his frame.

“By killing her, that the same grave may receive both our bodies. It seems to me, I know not why, that even when a corpse, contact with this woman must be an infinite delight to me.”

“Loredano!” exclaimed his companion, horror-stricken.

“You are my friend and you shall be my heir!” said the Italian, seizing his arm convulsively. “It is my condition: if you refuse, another will accept the treasure that you reject!”

The adventurer was struggling with two opposing sentiments; but his violent, blind, and mad ambition smothered the weak cry of conscience.

“Will you swear?” asked Loredano.

“I will!” replied Ruy, with a choking voice.

“Forward, then!”

Loredano opened the door of his room, and soon returned with a long and narrow plank, which he placed over the precipice like a sort of suspension bridge.

“Hold this plank, Ruy. I commit my life into your hands, thus giving you the highest proof of my confidence. It needs only that you allow the plank to move, to hurl me headlong upon the rocks.”

The Italian was then in the same place as on the night of the arrival, a few yards distant from Cecília’s window, which he could not reach by reason of the angle formed by the building and the rock. The plank was placed in the direction of the window. The first time his dagger had served him; now, however, he needed a firm support and the free movement of his arms. Ruy stood upon the end of the plank, and steadying himself by a beam projecting from the porch, kept this puerile bridge, on which the Italian was going to venture, motionless over the ravine.

Loredano, without hesitation, laid aside his weapons to lighten himself, took off his shoes, secured his long knife between his teeth, and set foot upon the plank.

“Wait for me on the other side,” said he.

“Yes,” answered Ruy, with trembling voice. The cause of this trembling was a diabolical thought that was beginning to agitate his mind. It occurred to him that he held Loredano and his secret in his hand; that to make himself free from the one and master of the other, it was enough for him to remove his foot, and let the plank incline over the precipice.

Still he hesitated, but not because anticipated remorse reproached him for the intended crime; he was already sunk too deeply in vice and depravity to draw back. But the Italian exercised over his accomplices such a fascination and so powerful an influence, that Ruy, even at that moment, could not escape from it. Loredano was suspended over the abyss by his hand; it was in his power to save him or to hurl him into the chasm; yet, even under these circumstances, Ruy teared him. He did not understand the cause of that irresistible terror, but he felt it like an evil spirit besetting him, or a nightmare. Meantime the image of bright and sparkling riches, radiating splendor and magnificence, passed before his eyes and dazzled him; a little courage, and he would be the sole possessor of the fabulous treasure of whose secret the Italian was the depository. But courage was what he lacked. Two or three times he was seized with an impulse to suspend himself to the beam, and let the plank roll into the chasm; it did not go beyond a desire. Finally he overcame the temptation. He had a moment of giddiness; his knees bent, and the plank oscillated so violently that he wondered how the Italian had been able to keep his feet.

Then his fear passed away; it was replaced by a sort of frenzy and rage. His first effort, though involuntary, had given him boldness, as the sight of blood excites a wild beast. A second movement, more violent than the first, agitated the plank, which tilted on the edge of the precipice, but no sound of a falling body was heard, only the noise of the wood upon the rock. Ruy, rendered desperate, was on the point of letting the plank go, when the voice of the

Italian, faint and hoarse, scarcely audible in the deep silence of the night, reached his ear. “Are you tired, Ruy? You can take away the plank; I have no further need of it.”

The adventurer was struck with consternation; clearly this man was an infernal spirit, hovering over the abyss, and laughing danger to scorn; a superior being, whom death could not touch. He did not know that Loredano, with his usual foresight, when he entered his room to get the plank, had taken the precaution to pass over one of the rafters of the porch, which was without ceiling, the end of a long rope, which fell on the outside of the wall at the distance of a yard or two from Cecília’s room. As soon as he had taken the first step on the improvised bridge he did not fail to stretch out his arm and seize this rope, which he at once fastened to his waist; then if his support had failed him he would have been suspended in the air, and would still have been able to realize his purpose, though with more difficulty. It was thus that the two movements of the plank caused by his accomplice did not have the expected result. Loredano at once divined what was passing in Ruy’s mind; but, not wishing to let him know that he was aware of his treachery, he made use of an indirect means of informing him that the attempt to throw him off was futile. The plank made not another movement; it remained fixed as if it had been solidly nailed to the rock.

Loredano advanced, reached Cecília’s window, and with the point of his knife raised the bolt; the lattice opening threw back the muslin curtains that veiled this asylum of modesty and innocence.

Cecília was asleep, wrapped in the bedclothes; her fair head was visible among the fine laces on which the golden ringlets of her hair were unrolled. Her symmetrical neck, whiter than the linen, was half disclosed, and her pretty bosom was revealed under the transparent drapery by the undulation that her gentle breathing imparted to her breast.

There was about that sleeping beauty an indefinable expression, a something chaste and innocent, enveloping her in her peaceful sleep, and seeming to keep off from her every profane thought. A man would have knelt by the side of that bed as at the feet of a saint, sooner than venture even to touch the drapery that protected her innocence.

Loredano approached, trembling, pale, and panting with excitement; the whole strength of his vigorous nature, the whole force of his powerful and irresistible will, there stood conquered, subdued, before a sleeping girl. What he felt when his ardent look fell upon the bed it is difficult to describe, - perhaps even difficult to imagine. It was at once supreme happiness and horrible torment. He was devoured by a brutal passion that caused the blood to boil in his veins and his heart to bound; yet the sight of that girl, whose only defence was her purity, enchained him. He felt his breast on fire and his lips athirst, but his palsied and nerveless arm refused to move and his body was paralyzed; his eyes flashed, and his dilated nostrils inhaled the voluptuous fragrance with which the atmosphere was impregnated, - nothing more. And the maiden smiled in her placid sleep, wrapped perhaps in some pleasing dream, one of those sweet dreams that God scatters like rose-leaves upon the beds of virgins. It was an angel in the presence of a demon; woman in the presence of a serpent; virtue in the presence of vice.

The Italian made a final effort, and passing his hand over his eyes as if to remove an unwelcome vision, went to a table and lighted a candle of rose-colored wax. The room, till then lighted only by a small lamp on a stand in the corner, was at once illuminated, and the lovely image of Cecília was encircled by an aureole. Feeling the light upon her eyes, she turned her face a little the other way, without interrupting her sleep.

Loredano passed between the bed and the wall, and could then admire her in all her beauty; he remembered nothing else, he had forgotten the world and his treasure; nor did he think of his purposed abduction. The dove, asleep on the bureau in its nest of cotton, rose up and flapped its wings; the Italian, roused by the noise, knew that it was already late, and that he had no time to lose.

IV. AT NIGHT.

SOME explanation is necessary of the events of the preceding chapter. When Loredano found himself compelled by Álvaro's threat to set out for Rio de Janeiro, he was cast down; but after the lapse of a few moments a diabolic smile curled his lips. That smile was an infamous thought, which had flashed upon his mind like the flame of those transitory fires that shine in the bosom of the darkness on sultry nights. It occurred to him that at the moment when all supposed him on his way he might be preparing for the execution of his design, which he would carry into effect that very night.

In his conversation with Ruy Soeiro, he imparted to him his instructions, - brief, simple, and concise; they were to get rid of the men who might prove an obstacle to their enterprise. To that end his accomplices received orders that when they retired to sleep each one should place himself by the side of one of those faithful to Dom Antônio. At that time and in those regions it was not possible for each of the adventurers to have a room of his own; few enjoyed the privilege of a room at all, and these were obliged to share the accommodation with a companion each; the rest slept in the spacious porch that occupied almost the whole of that part of the building.

Ruy Soeiro had, according to Loredano's instructions, arranged matters in such a way that at that moment each of the adventurers devoted to Dom Antônio had at his side a man who appeared to be asleep, but was only waiting for the appointed signal to plunge his dagger into the throat of his companion. At the same time there were at the corners of the house great bundles of dry straw, placed near the doors or arranged along the edge of the roof, which only awaited a spark to kindle a conflagration through the whole building.

Ruy Soeiro, with a sagacity and discretion worthy of his chief, had arranged all this, part during the day and part at the dead hour of night, when everything was at rest. He did not forget the special injunction of Loredano, and volunteered to keep guard during the night with one of his companions, considering that an attack by the enemy was

imminent. The worthy esquire, who knew him as one of the most valiant of the band, fell into the snare and accepted his offer. Master of the field, the adventurer could then freely complete his preparations, and for greater security formed a plan to rid himself of the esquire, who might at any moment give him trouble.

Ayres Gomes, in company with his old friend Master Nunes, was emptying a bottle of Valverde[30] wine, which they drank slowly, swallow by swallow, in order thus to eke out the -scanty supply for two such formidable drinkers.

Master Nunes applied his mouth lovingly to the jug, took a draught, and smacking his lips, leaned back in his seat, crossing his hands over his prominent belly with every expression of happiness.

“I have been wanting to ask you something, friend Ayres, ever since I have been here, but it always escapes me.”

“Don’t let it escape now, Nunes. Here I am, ready to answer you.”

“Tell me, then, who is that man that went with Dom Diogo whom you call by some outlandish name, not Portuguese?”

“O, do you mean Loredano? A vagabond!”

“Do you know this man, Ayres?”

“Why, bless me! Isn’t he one of our number?”

“When I ask if you know him, I mean, do you know where he came from, who he was, and what he was doing?”

“No, upon my word! He came here one day asking hospitality, and afterwards, when a man left, he took his place.”

“And when was this, if you remember?”

“Wait! I am in my fifty-ninth -” The esquire counted his fingers, reckoning his age, which served him for a calendar. “It was about this time a year ago; in the beginning of March.”

“Are you quite sure?” exclaimed Master Nunes.

“Entirely; the reckoning never fails. But what is the matter with you?”

Master Nunes had started up terrified. “Nothing! It is not possible!”

“Don’t you believe it?”

“That is not it, Ayres! It is a sacrilege! a work of Satan! a horrible simony!”

“What do you mean, man? Pray, explain yourself.”

Master Nunes finally recovered from his agitation, and related to the esquire his suspicions respecting Brother Angelo di Lucca and his death, which he had never been able to explain. He pointed out to him the coincidence of the disappearance of the Carmelite and the appearance of the adventurer, and the fact that they were of the same nation. “Then,” concluded Nunes, “that voice, that look! When I saw him today I started, and recoiled with a fright, thinking the friar had risen from his grave.”

Ayres Gomes sprang up in a fury, and leaping upon his bed, seized his sword, which was hanging at the head.

“What are you going to do?” cried Master Nunes.

“Kill him, and this time for good, so that he will not return.”

“You forget that he is far away.”

“True!” muttered the esquire, gnashing his teeth with rage.

A slight noise was heard at the door; the two friends attributed it to the wind, and did not even turn their heads; then, sitting face to face, they continued in a low voice their conversation, which Nunes, by his abrupt revelation, had interrupted.

In the meantime events were passing outside that should have attracted the attention of the worthy esquire. The noise he had heard was produced by the turn that Ruy had given the key to lock the door. The adventurer had heard the entire conversation. At first terrified, he recovered his courage, and recollected that, in any event, it was well to be master of the Italian’s secret for future emergencies. Relying upon this excellent idea, Ruy put the key in his bosom and joined his companion, who was on guard at the steps. He was waiting for Loredano, who was to enter the house at the dead of night, to direct the execution of the plot he had framed with a superior skill.

The Italian had easily deceived Dom Diogo; he knew that the ardent cavalier would travel in hot haste, and would not delay on the way for any cause. A few leagues from the Paquequer he pretended to have broken his saddle girth, and stopped to repair it. While Dom Diogo and his companions were expecting him to follow them close at hand he had returned on his track and concealed in the neighborhood, waited for night to come on.

When he perceived that all was still he approached, gave the prearranged signal, the note of the owl, and stealthily ascended the steps.

The rest we have already seen. Finding that everything was ready, Loredano proceeded to the execution of his design, and entered Cecília’s room. To take the girl in his arms, cross the esplanade, reach the door of the porch, and give the agreed signal, was a thing he expected to accomplish in a moment. If Cecília, thus torn from her bed, should utter a cry that he could not smother, it would matter little; as before she could awake anyone he would have reached

the other side, and then, at a word from him, fire and sword would come to his aid. Ruy would set fire to the straw prepared for that purpose, and the knives of his accomplices would enter the throats of the sleeping men. In the midst of this horror and confusion the twenty demons would finish their work, and flee, like the evil spirits of the ancient legends, when the first ray of dawn put an end to their infernal vigil.

They would then proceed to Rio de Janeiro; there, bound together by a common crime, a common danger and ambition, Loredano expected to find in them trusty and devoted agents in carrying his enterprise forward to completion.

While treachery was thus undermining the peace, the happiness, the lives, and honor, of this family, they were all sleeping tranquilly and without solicitude; no presentiment warned them of the threatening calamity. Loredano, thanks to his agility and strength, had even reached the young girl's bed without betraying his presence by the slightest noise, or attracting the attention of anyone in the house to what was going on.

Certain, therefore, of success, the Italian, warned by the innocent little bird, which did not know the evil it was doing, gave his attention to completing his work. He opened Cecília's bureau, took out silk and linen clothing, and making of it as small a bundle as possible, wrapped it in on a of the skins that served for a carpet, and placed it in a chair ready to be caught up at any moment. It was a strange fancy on the part of this man. While committing a crime, he had the delicacy to seek to lighten the girl's misfortune by taking care that she should lack nothing on the uncomfortable journey she would have to make.

When everything was ready he opened the door leading into the garden, and studied the path he would have to take. The door was in a corner of the room, opposite the space between the bed and wall; he had but a single movement to make, - to seize the girl, and spring out of the room.

As he approached her a suppressed and agonizing groan was heard.

His hair bristled up on his forehead, and drops of cold sweat coursed down his pale and distorted cheeks.

Little by little he recovered from the stupor that had paralyzed him, and looked wildly around.

Nothing! Not even an insect seemed to be awake in the deep solitude of night, in the midst of which everything was asleep except crime, the true familiar spirit of the earth, the evil genius of the superstitions of our ancestors. Everything was quiet; even the wind seemed to have taken shelter in the flower-cups, and to have fallen asleep in that perfumed cradle as in the lap of its mistress.

The Italian rallied from the violent shock he had received, took a step forward, and bent over the bed.

Cecília was at that moment dreaming. Her countenance lighted up with an expression of angelic joy; her little hand, lying nestled in her bosom, moved with the slow and lazy movement of sleep, and fell back upon her face. The little enameled cross she wore on her neck, now held in her hand, grazed her lips, and celestial music escaped, as if God had touched one of the strings of his Eolian harp. At first a smile fluttered upon her lips; then the smile folded its wings and formed a kiss; and finally the kiss half-opened like a flower, and exhaled a perfumed sigh. “Pery!” Her breast heaved gently, and her hand sliding down nestled again in her bosom.

The Italian straightened up with a pallid countenance. He did not venture to touch that body so chaste and pure; he could not fix his eyes upon that face radiant with innocence and guilelessness.

But time was urging. He made a final effort over himself, rested his knee upon the edge of the bed, closed his eyes, and stretched out his hands.

V. GOD DISPOSES.

LOREDANO’S arm was extended over the bed, but the hand that was advancing to touch Cecília’s body stopped in the midst of the movement, and with a sudden impulse struck against the wall. An arrow - he could not tell whence it came - had sped through the air with the rapidity of lightning, and before its loud, sharp whiz could be heard had fastened his hand to the side of the room.

He staggered, and sank down behind the bed; it was time, for a second arrow, sent with the same force and the same rapidity as the first, struck the spot where the shadow of his head had been projected.

Loredano, in the agony of pain, comprehended the whole affair. He had read upon that arrow that the hand of Pery had wounded him; and without seeing him felt the Indian approaching, terrible with hatred, vengeance, anger, and desperation, at the offense his mistress had suffered.

Then the miscreant felt fear; raising himself on his knees, he wrenched out convulsively with his teeth the arrow that nailed his hand to the wall, and threw himself into the garden, blind, mad, and frantic.

At that very instant, two seconds perhaps after the last arrow had fallen into the room, the foliage of the *oleo* in front of Cecília’s window was agitated, and a figure swinging over the chasm on a fragile branch, alighted on the windowsill. There, grasping the side, it sprang into the room with remarkable agility; the light falling full upon it revealed its lithe and slender grace. It was Pery.

He advanced to the bed, and finding his mistress safe, breathed freely. The young girl, half awakened by the noise of Loredano's flight, had turned over, and then continued her sound and refreshing sleep, the sleep of youth and innocence.

Pery was eager to follow Loredano and kill him, as he already had killed his two accomplices; but he decided not to leave his mistress exposed to a new insult like that to which she had already been subjected, but rather to watch over her peace and safety.

His first care was to put out the candle; then closing his eyes he approached the bed, and with the utmost delicacy pulled up the blue damask quilt around the girl's neck. It seemed to him that it would be a profanation for his eyes to admire the charms that Cecília's modesty kept always concealed; he thought that the man who once had seen such loveliness ought never again to behold the light of day.

After this first attention the Indian restored order in the room; he put the clothing back in the bureau, closed the lattice and window, and washed off the blood stains from the floor and wall, all so carefully and adroitly as not to disturb the young girl's sleep. When he had finished his task he drew near the bed again, and by the dim light of the lamp contemplated Cecília's delicate and charming features. He was so full of joy and satisfaction at having arrived in time to save her from an indignity and perhaps a crime, so happy at seeing her calm and smiling, without having experienced the least fear, the slightest agitation, that he felt the necessity of expressing his delight to her in some way. At that moment he discovered upon the carpet near the bed two delicate slippers, lined with satin, and so small that they seemed made for the feet of a child; he knelt and kissed them respectfully, as if they had been a sacred relic.

It was then nearly four o'clock; day would soon break; already the stars were disappearing one by one, and the night was beginning to lose the deep silence of sleeping nature. The Indian fastened on the outside the door of the room opening into the garden, and putting the key in his girdle seated himself at the threshold like a faithful dog guarding his master's house, resolved to permit no one to approach.

There he reflected on what had taken place, and blamed himself for having permitted the Italian to enter Cecília's room; but Pery did himself an injustice, for Providence alone could have done more that night than he: everything possible to the intelligence, courage, sagacity, and strength, of man he had accomplished. After Loredano's departure, and the conversation he had with Álvaro, the Indian, satisfied that his mistress was no longer in danger and that the Italian's two accomplices would, like him, be expelled, turned his attention to the expected attack of the Aymorés and at once left the house.

His purpose was to see if he could discover in the vicinity of the Paquequer any indications of the presence of some tribe of the great Guarany race to which he belonged: he would have in it a friend and ally for Dom Antônio. The inveterate hatred existing between the tribes of that great race and the degenerate nation of the Aymorés justified

Pery's hope. But unfortunately, after searching through the forest all day, he found not the slightest trace of what he was seeking.

The nobleman was, therefore, reduced to his own proper forces. But though they were small, the Indian was not discouraged; he had confidence in himself, and knew that in the last extremity his devotion for Cecília would suggest to him means of saving her and those whom she loved.

When he returned to the house it was already dark. He sought Álvaro, and asked him what had been done with the two adventurers. The cavalier told him that Dom Antônio had refused to believe the accusation.

In fact, the honest nobleman, accustomed to respect and fidelity from his men, would not permit a suspicion to be entertained without proof. Meantime, as Pery's word had great weight with him, he had waited to hear from his mouth the narrative of what he had witnessed, before deciding what value he ought to attach to such an accusation.

Pery retired to his cabin with a troubled heart, repenting that he had not persevered in his first purpose. While those two men, whom he supposed already expelled, remained there, he knew that a peril was hanging over the house.

Accordingly, he resolved not to sleep. He took his bow, and seated himself at the door. Though he had the carbine that Dom Antônio had given him, the bow was his favorite weapon; it took no time to load, made no noise, discharged almost instantaneously two or three shots, and its arrow was as terrible and as unerring as a ball.

After considerable lapse of time he heard the note of an owl in the direction of the steps; that note excited his astonishment, for two reasons: first, because it was louder than the cry of that presaging bird; secondly, because instead of coming from the top of a tree it came from the ground.

This reflection caused him to rise; he distrusted the owl, because it had habits different from its companions. He wished to learn the reason for this.

He saw on the other side of the esplanade three figures crossing quickly. This increased his suspicions; the watch ordinarily consisted of two, and not three, men.

He followed them at a distance; but when he reached the courtyard he saw only one of the men entering the porch; the others had disappeared. Pery sought for them everywhere, but did not see them. They were concealed behind the pillar that stood at the angle of the rock.

Supposing that they, too, had entered the porch, he stooped down and crept in. Suddenly his hand came in contact with cold steel, which he knew at once was the blade of a dagger.

"Is it you, Ruy?" asked a low voice.

Pery was silent; but immediately Ruy's name reminded him of Loredano and his plot. He perceived that some mischief was brewing, and decided upon his course.

"Yes," he answered in an almost imperceptible tone. "Is it time?"

"No."

"They are all asleep."

While they were exchanging these few words, Pery's hand running along the steel blade found another hand grasping the handle of the dagger.

He left the porch, and proceeded to Ayres Gomes's room; the door was fastened, and near it a large pile of straw had been placed.

All this proclaimed a scheme ready for execution; Pery understood it, but feared there was no longer time to undo the work of the enemy.

What was that man doing whom he found lying down as if asleep, with his dagger drawn ready to strike? What did that question about the time and that announcement that all were asleep signify? What meant the straw placed against the esquire's door?

There was no room for doubt; there were men there waiting a signal to kill their sleeping comrades and set fire to the house; all was lost if the plot was not frustrated at once.

It was necessary to awake the sleepers to warn them of their danger, or at least to prepare them to defend themselves and escape from a certain death.

The Indian grasped his head convulsively with both hands, as if to wrest by force from his agitated and disordered brain a saving thought. His broad breast expanded; a happy idea had suddenly lighted up the confusion of opposing thoughts that pressed upon him, reanimating his courage and strength.

The idea was original. He recollected that the porch was full of large vessels containing water, fermented wines, and Indian liquors, of which the adventurers always provided an ample store. He ran again to this quarter of the house and drew the spigot of the first vessel the liquor began to run along the floor; he was on the point of passing to the second when the voice that had already addressed him was heard anew, low but threatening.

"Who goes there?"

Pery perceived that his idea was likely to be without effect, and perhaps might serve only to hasten what he wished to prevent. He therefore did not hesitate; and when the adventurer who had spoken rose, he felt a grip as of iron on his, throat, which strangled him before he could utter a cry.

The Indian laid the stiffened body on the floor without making the least noise, and finished his work; all the vessels in the porch gradually emptied themselves and inundated the room. In a moment the chill would awaken the sleeping men and drive them out; this was what he expected.

Free from the greatest danger Pery made a tour around the house to see if everything was quiet, and found in every quarter of the building bundles of straw arranged for the purpose of setting fire to it. He rendered these preparations useless, and reached the corner of the house opposite his cabin; he appeared to be looking for some one. There he heard the heavy breathing of a man clinging to the wall near Cecília's garden.

He drew his knife; the night was so dark that it was impossible for him to discern the least shadow or outline; yet he knew that it was Ruy Soeiro.

Pery had the keen and delicate hearing and the sense of smell of the savage, which serve instead of sight. The sound of the breathing guided him; he listened a moment, raised his arm, and his knife was buried in the throat of his victim. Not a groan escaped from the inert mass that swayed to and fro for an instant, and then fell.

Pery picked up his bow, which he had placed against the wall, and turning to take a glance at Cecília's room, started.

He saw under the door the vivid reflection of a light, and immediately after on the foliage of the *oleo* a glimmer, indicating that the window was open.

He raised his arms in despair and inexpressible anguish; he was within a few feet of his mistress, and yet a wall and a door separated him from her, when perhaps, at that very moment, she was in extreme peril.

What should he do? Hurl himself against the door, break it down, shiver it to pieces? But it might be that the light had no significance, and that the window had been opened by Cecília. This last thought calmed him, - the more as nothing revealed the existence of danger, while everything was quiet in the garden and in the room.

He sprang to his cabin, and climbed into the *oleo* to see why his mistress was awake at that hour.

The spectacle that was presented to his eyes caused a cold shudder to run through his body: the open lattice revealed the sleeping girl and the Italian, who, having opened the door, was approaching the bed. A cry of despair and agony rose to his lips, but he struggled to repress it. Then clinging to the tree with his legs, he extended himself along the branch, and drew his bow.

His heart beat violently, and for a moment his arm trembled merely with the thought that his arrow must pass near Cecília. But when the Italian's hand advanced to touch her, he thought of nothing, - saw nothing but those fingers ready to pollute with their touch the body of his mistress; remembered nothing but that horrible profanation. The arrow flew with the rapidity of his thought, and the hand was nailed to the wall.

It was only then that Pery reflected that it would have been wiser to strike that hand at the fountain of the life that animated it, to prostrate the body to which that arm belonged; the second arrow followed the first, and the Italian would have ceased to exist, if pain had not compelled him to bow down.

VI. THE REVOLT.

WHEN Pery had finished his reflections upon what had occurred, he rose, opened the door again, fastened it on the inside, and followed along the corridor leading from Cecília's room to the interior of the house.

He was at ease respecting the future; he knew that Bento Simões and Ruy Soeiro would trouble him no more, that the Italian could not escape from him, and that at that moment all the adventurers must be awake; but he thought it prudent to warn Dom Antônio of the situation of affairs.

At that time Loredano had reached the porch, where a new and terrible surprise - a final disappointment - awaited him. On escaping from Cecília's room, his intention was to gain the rear of the house, pronounce the watchword agreed upon, and master of the field, to return with his accomplices, seize the girl, and avenge himself on Pery.

He little imagined that the Indian had overthrown all his plans; but on reaching the courtyard he saw the porch lighted by torches, and all the adventurers standing around an object which he could not distinguish.

He drew near, and discovered the body of his accomplice, Bento Simões, lying on the inundated floor. The adventurer's eyes were protuding, his tongue hanging from his mouth, his neck full of bruises; in short, every sign of violent strangulation appeared.

A deathlike pallor overspread the Italian's face; he searched with his eyes for Ruy Soeiro, but saw him not; surely the chastisement of Providence was falling upon their heads; he knew that he was irretrievably lost, and that only audacity and desperation could save him.

The extremity of his peril inspired him with a thought worthy of himself. He would extract aid for the accomplishment of his purposes from the very fact that seemed to defeat them; he would convert the chastisement into a weapon of vengeance.

The amazed adventurers, not understanding what they saw, stood looking at each other, and muttering in a low voice conjectures concerning the death of their comrade. One party suddenly awakened by the running water, the other, not being asleep, merely startled, they had risen, and amid a chorus of imprecations and blasphemies, lighted torches to ascertain the cause of the inundation. It was then that they discovered the body of Bento Simões, and became still more astonished; the conspirators fearing that this was but the beginning of their punishment, the rest indignant at the assassination of their comrade.

Loredano read what was passing in their minds. “Do you know what this means?” said he.

“No! Tell us!” cried the adventurers.

“It means,” continued the Italian, “that there is a viper in this house, a serpent that we are nourishing in our bosom, which will bite us all with its poisoned fang.”

“How? What do you mean? Explain yourself.”

“Look,” said the friar, pointing to the corpse, and holding up his wounded hand. “Behold the first victim, and the second, who escaped by a miracle. The third, - Who knows what has become of Ruy Soeiro?”

“True! Where is Ruy?” said Martim Vaz.

“Perhaps he is dead, too!”

“After him will come another and another, until we are exterminated one by one; until every Christian has been sacrificed.”

“But by whom?”

“Give the name of the vile assassin! An example is necessary! The name!”

“Can’t you guess?” answered the Italian. “Who is there in this house that can desire the death of the whites and the destruction of our religion? Who but the heretic, the heathen, the base and treacherous savage?”

“Pery?” cried the adventurers.

“Yes, that Indian, who intends to assassinate us all to satiate his revenge!”

“That shall never be, I swear it, Loredano!” exclaimed Vasco Affonso.

“Faith!” cried another, “leave this matter to me. Give yourself no further trouble!”

“Let not this night pass. The body of Bento Simões calls for justice.”

“And justice shall be done.”

“At once.”

“Yes, this very moment. Come! Follow me.”

Loredano listened to these rapid exclamations, which exhibited the intensity of their feelings; but when the adventurers were ready to rush forth in search of the Indian, he restrained them with a gesture. Such a course did not suit him - Pery’s death was an incidental matter; his chief object was quite another thing, and he expected to accomplish it easily.

“What are you going to do?” he asked authoritatively of his comrades.

The adventurers were astounded at such a question.

“Are you going to kill him?”

“Of course.”

“And don’t you know that you cannot do it? That he is protected, loved, esteemed by those who little reck whether we die or live?”

“Although he is protected, yet when he is guilty -”

“How you deceive yourselves! Who will believe him guilty? You? Very well; but others will think him innocent and will defend him, and you will have no remedy but to bow the head and submit in silence.”

“No, no! That is too much!”

“Do you think that we are cattle to be butchered with impunity?” added Martim Vaz.

“You are worse than cattle; you are slaves!”

“By St. Blaise, you are right, Loredano.”

“You will see your comrades foully assassinated, and will not be able to avenge them; you will even be obliged to swallow your complaints, because the assassin is sacred! Yes, I repeat, you will not be permitted to touch him.”

“Very well, I’ll show you!”

“And I!” cried the entire band.

“What is your intention?” asked the Italian.

“Our intention is to ask Dom Antônio to deliver Bento’s murderer into our hands.”

“Exactly!”

“And if he refuses we are absolved from our oaths, and will execute justice ourselves.”

“You act like men of courage and honor. Let us be united, and we shall obtain satisfaction. But to this end firmness and resolution are necessary. Let us lose no time. Which of you will undertake to go as envoy to Dom Antônio?”

João Feio, one of the boldest and most turbulent of the band, stepped forth.

“I will go.”

“Do you know what to say to him?”

“Be at ease on that point. I’ll tickle his ears!”

“Are you going at once?”

“This very instant.”

A calm, powerful, and serious voice, a voice that caused all the adventurers to start, was heard at the entrance of the porch. “It is not necessary for you to go, for I have come. Here I am.”

Dom Antônio de Mariz, calm and unmoved, advanced into the center of the group, and folding his arms upon his breast looked slowly and sternly around upon the adventurers.

The nobleman had not a single weapon, and yet his venerable aspect, the firmness of his voice, and his proud and noble bearing, were enough to make all these threatening men bow their heads.

Warned by Pery of the events that had taken place that night, Dom Antônio had started to go out, when Álvaro and Ayres Gomes made their appearance.

The esquire, who, after his conversation with Master Nunes, had gone to sleep, had been suddenly awakened by the imprecations and cries of the adventurers when the water reached the mats on which they were lying. Surprised at this extraordinary noise, Ayres struck fire, lighted a candle, and went to the door to see what was disturbing his sleep. The door, as we know, was locked and without a key.

The esquire rubbed his eyes to satisfy himself of what he saw, and awaking Nunes, asked him who had taken that precaution. His friend was as ignorant as himself.

At that moment they heard the voice of the Italian exciting the adventurers to revolt: Ayres Gomes then knew what was going on.

He seized Master Nunes, placed him against the wall, as if he had been a ladder, and without saying a word climbed from the bed upon his shoulders, and lifting the tiles with his head, raised himself up between the rafters.

Upon gaining the roof, he considered what he ought to do, and decided that the true course was to inform Álvaro and the nobleman, to whom it belonged to take such measures as the case required.

Dom Antônio heard the esquire's statement unmoved, as he had that of the Indian. "Well, my friends, I know what it behooves me to do. No noise; let us not disturb the quiet of the house; I am sure that this will blow over. Wait for me here."

"I cannot permit you to risk yourself alone," said Álvaro, starting to follow.

"Remain; you and these two devoted friends will watch over my wife, Cecília, and Isabel. Under the circumstances in which we are now placed, this is necessary."

"Consent at least that one of us accompany you."

"No, my presence is enough; while here all your valor and fidelity scarcely suffice for the treasure which I intrust to your keeping."

The nobleman took his hat, and a few moments afterward appeared unexpectedly in the midst of the adventurers, who, trembling, downcast, and overwhelmed with shame, did not dare to utter a word.

"Here I am!" repeated he. "State what you want of Dom Antônio de Mariz, and state it clearly and briefly. If it be a just demand, you shall be satisfied; if you are at fault, you shall receive the punishment you deserve."

Not one of the adventurers dared to raise his eyes; all stood mute.

"Are you silent? Is something going on here, then, that you dare not reveal? Shall I perchance find myself compelled to punish severely a first example of revolt and disobedience? Speak! I wish to know the names of the guilty!"

The same silence replied to the stern and determined words.

Loredano had hesitated from the beginning of this scene. He had not the courage to present himself before Dom Antônio; but at the same time he felt that if he permitted things to proceed as they were now going he was inevitably lost. He advanced.

“There are no wrongdoers here, Dom Antônio de Mariz,” said he, gaining courage as he proceeded. “Here are men who are treated like dogs; who are sacrificed to a whim of yours, and who are resolved to vindicate their rights as men and as Christians!”

“Yes!” cried the adventurers, regaining courage. “We wish our lives to be respected!”

“We are not slaves! We will obey, but we will not submit to thraldom.”

“We are of more consequence than a heretic!”

“We have risked our lives to defend you!”

Dom Antônio heard unmoved all these exclamations, which gradually rose to the tone of menace.

“Silence, villains! You forget that Dom Antônio de Mariz still has strength enough to tear out the tongue that presumes to insult him! Wretches, who regard duty as a benefit! You have risked your lives to defend me? And what was your obligation, men who sell your right arms to the highest bidder? You are less than slaves, less than dogs, less than wild beasts! You are vile and infamous traitors; you deserve more than death; - you deserve contempt.”

The adventurers, whose rage was silently increasing, could restrain themselves no longer: from threatening words they proceeded to acts.

“Friends!” cried Loredano, skillfully taking advantage of the opportunity, “will you submit to such atrocious insults, to have contempt spit in your faces? And for what reason?”

“No! Never!” vociferated the furious adventurers. Drawing their daggers they narrowed the circle around the nobleman; a confusion of cries, abuse, and threats, running from mouth to mouth, followed, while their uplifted arms still hesitated to strike the blow.

Dom Antônio, calm, majestic, unmoved, looked around upon those angry faces with a smile of scorn; and ever proud and haughty, seemed beneath the threatening daggers not the intended victim, but the master giving the word of command.

VII. THE SAVAGES.

THE adventurers, with their daggers raised, threatened, but did not venture to break the narrow circle that separated them from Dom Antônio. Respect, that powerful moral force, still held sway over the souls of those men, blind with

anger and excitement: all were waiting for the first blow to be struck, but none had the courage to be the first to strike.

Loredano saw that an example was necessary; the desperateness of his situation, the violent passions that were at work in his heart, lent him that frenzy which supplies the place of courage in extremities. He grasped the handle of his knife convulsively, and closing his eyes and taking a step blindly, raised his hand to strike.

The nobleman, with a proud movement, threw open his doublet and uncovered his breast; not the slightest tremor agitated the muscles of his face; his haughty brow maintained the same composure; his clear, keen glance remained undisturbed.

Such was the magnetic influence exerted by that proud and noble courage that the Italian's arm trembled, and the touch of the knife-point upon the nobleman's waistcoat paralyzed the assassin's stiffened fingers. Dom Antônio smiled with disdain, and bringing his clenched fist down upon Loredano's head, laid him at his feet a shapeless and inert mass. The fall of the body echoed amid a profound silence; the adventurers, mute and bewildered, seemed to wish to sink into the earth.

"Lower your weapons, wretches! The steel that is to enter the breast of Dom Antônio de Mariz will not be stained by the cowardly and traitorous hands of base assassins! God reserves a just and glorious death for those who have lived an honorable life!"

The stunned adventurers sheathed their daggers mechanically; that word, so clear, calm, and firmly spoken, had so imperative a tone, such force of will, that it was impossible to resist.

"The punishment that awaits you shall be severe; expect neither clemency or pardon. Four of you, by lot, shall suffer the punishment due to murder; the rest shall perform the office of executioners. Both punishment and office, you perceive, are worthy of you!"

The nobleman pronounced these words in a tone of extreme contempt, and eyed the adventurers as if to see whether any opposition, any murmur of disobedience, appeared among them; but all those men, so lately enraged, were now abashed and humble.

"Within an hour," continued he, pointing to Loredano's body, "this man shall be executed in the presence of the band; for him there is no trial; I condemn him as a father and as a chief; as a man kills an ungrateful dog that bites him. He is too low for me to touch him with my weapons; I deliver him over to the executioner."

With the same composure that he had maintained from the moment when he unexpectedly made his appearance among them, the aged nobleman passed through the adventurers, now quiet and respectful, and proceeded to the door. There he turned round, and raising his hand to his hat, uncovered his handsome silvery head, which stood out

against the dark background of the night, in the reddish glimmer of the torches, with admirable distinctness and brilliancy.

“If any one of you shows the least sign of disobedience; if a single one of my orders is not executed promptly and faithfully; I, Dom Antônio de Mariz, swear before God and on my honor that not a man shall leave this house alive. There are thirty of you, but your lives, every one of them, I hold in my hand; a single movement on my part is enough to exterminate you and rid the earth of thirty assassins.”

Just as the nobleman was withdrawing, Álvaro made his appearance, pale with emotion, but glowing with spirit and indignation. “Who has dared here to raise his voice against Dom Antônio de Mariz?” exclaimed the young man.

The nobleman, smiling with pride, placed his hand on the cavalier’s arm. “Don’t meddle in this matter, Álvaro; you are too noble to avenge an affront of this kind, and I exalted enough not to be offended by it.”

“But, sir, an example should be made!”

“An example shall be made, and as is fitting. Here there are only culprits and executioners. The place does not befit you. Come!”

The young man made no resistance, but accompanied Dom Antônio, who proceeded slowly to the hall, where he found Ayres Gomes.

As for Pery, he had returned to Cecília’s garden, resolved to defend his mistress against all the world.

The day was breaking. The nobleman called Ayres Gomes, and entered with him into his armory, where they had a long conference. What passed there remained a secret between God and those two men; but Álvaro noticed when the door opened, that Dom Antônio was gloomy, and the esquire pale as a corpse.

At that moment a slight noise was heard at the entrance to the hall; four adventurers standing motionless awaited the nobleman’s order to approach.

Dom Antônio beckoned to them, and they came and kneeled at his feet; the tears rolled down their sunburnt cheeks, and the words faltered on their pallid lips, but just now uttering menaces.

“What means this?” asked he sternly.

One of the adventurers answered: “We have come to surrender ourselves into your hands; we prefer to appeal to your heart rather than have recourse to arms to escape the punishment of our misconduct.”

“And your comrades?” replied the nobleman.

“God forgive them, sir, the enormity of the crime they are about to commit. After you withdrew everything changed; they are preparing to attack you!”

“Let them come,” said Dom Antônio; “I am ready to receive them. But why do you not join them? Are you not aware that Dom Antônio de Mariz pardons a delinquency, but never insubordination?”

“Be it so,” said the adventurer, who spoke in the name of his comrades; “we shall accept uncomplainingly whatever punishment you impose. Command and we obey. We are four against twenty and odd; give us as a penalty to die in your defense, - to atone by our death for a moment of madness! This is the boon we ask?”

Dom Antônio looked with admiration upon the men kneeling at his feet, and recognized in them the remnant of his old companions in arms, of the time when he fought against the enemies of Portugal.

He was affected; his great soul, unshaken in the midst of danger, haughty in the presence of menaces, was easily controlled by noble and generous sentiments. “Rise. I recognize you! You are no longer the traitors whom I just now reprimanded; you are the brave comrades who fought at my side. What you now do obliterates what you did an hour ago. Yes! You deserve to die together with me fighting once more in the same ranks. Dom Antônio de Mariz pardons you. You may hold up your heads, and carry them high!”

The adventurers rose, radiant with joy at the pardon their noble chief had granted them; they were all ready to give their lives to save his.

What had occurred after Dom Antônio left the porch, it would take long to describe fully. Loredano on coming to himself learned the order that had been issued concerning him. So much was not necessary to cause the bold adventurer to resort to his eloquence for the purpose of exciting the revolt anew. He pictured the situation of all as desperate; attributed his punishment and the misfortunes that were to follow to the infatuation for Pery; exhausted, in short, the resources of his intellect.

Dom Antônio was no longer there to restrain by his presence the growing wrath, the excitement that spread at first silently, the complaints and murmurs that at last broke forth in chorus.

An incident occurred to kindle the gathering flame. Pery, as soon as day began to break, saw, at some distance from the garden, the body of Ruy Soeiro, and fearing lest his mistress on awakening should witness this sad spectacle, took the body, and crossing the esplanade, threw it into the center of the courtyard. The adventurers turned pale, and for a moment were stupefied; then a fierce, mad anger burst forth; they were as if possessed with fury and revenge. There was no longer any hesitation; the revolt became open.

Only the little group of four men, who, after Dom Antônio left, had kept aloof, refused to join it. They, when they saw their comrades, with Loredano at their head, preparing to attack the nobleman, went, as we have seen, to submit voluntarily to punishment, and to join their chief, and share his lot.

It was not long before Joao Feio presented himself as ambassador, in behalf of the malcontents; the nobleman refused to hear him.

“Tell your fellows, rebel, that Dom Antônio de Mariz imposes, but does not discuss, conditions; that they are under sentence, and shall see whether or not I know how to make good my oath.”

He then set about arranging his means of defense; he could only count upon fourteen combatants, himself, Álvaro, Pery, Ayres Gomes, Master Nunes with his companions, and the four men who had remained faithful; the enemy numbered more than twenty.

His family, now awake, learned with sad surprise the events of that fatal night. Dona Lauriana, Cecília, and Isabel, withdrew into the chapel and prayed, while the men were making every preparation for a desperate resistance.

The adventurers, under Loredano’s command, formed and marched toward the house, prepared to deliver a terrible assault; their fury redoubled in proportion as remorse deep down in their consciences began to show them the enormity of their action.

At the moment they were turning the corner a hoarse sound was heard, prolonged like the dull echo of distant thunder.

Pery started, and springing to the edge of the esplanade stretched his eyes along the plain that bordered the forest. Almost at the same time one of the adventurers at Loredano’s side fell transfixed by an arrow.

“The Aymoré’s!”

Scarcely had Pery uttered this exclamation when a moving line, a long arch of lively and brilliant colors, appeared in the distance, undulating upon the plain, and flashing in the light of the rising sun. Half-naked men, of gigantic stature and savage aspect, covered with skins of animals and yellow and scarlet feathers, armed with huge clubs and enormous bows, were advancing with fearful cries.

The trumpet sounded; the noise of the implements of war, mingled with the shouts and yells, formed a horrid concert, an ominous harmony, revealing the instincts of that savage horde reduced to the level of wild beasts.

“The Aymoré’s!” repeated the adventurers, with pallid cheeks.

VIII. DISCOURAGEMENT.

TWO days passed after the arrival of the Aymorés; the position of Dom Antônio and his family was desperate.

The savages had attacked the house in great force; at their head the women, terrible with hate, excited them to revenge. Their arrows darkened the air, settled down like a cloud upon the esplanade, and riddled the doors and walls of the building.

In presence of the imminent peril that threatened all the revolted adventurers retired, and set about defending themselves from the attack of the savages. There was, so to speak, an armistice between the rebels and the nobleman; without uniting, the adventurers knew that they had to repel a common enemy, even if afterward they should carry forward their revolt to a conclusion.

Dom Antônio, intrenched in the part of the house that he occupied, surrounded by his family and his faithful friends, had resolved to defend to the last extremity these pledges in trusted to his love. If Providence did not permit a miracle to save them, they were all destined to perish; but he intended to be the last, that he might see that no insult was offered even to their remains. It was his duty as a father and his duty as a chief; as the captain is the last to abandon the ship, he would be the last to abandon life, after having secured to the ashes of his friends the respect due to the dead.

How changed was that house which we saw so full of joy and hope! Part of the building, that joining the portion occupied by the adventurers, had been abandoned from motives of prudence; Dom Antônio had gathered his family in the inner part of the dwelling to avoid accident. Cecília had left her charming little room, and Pery had established there his headquarters and center of operations, for the Indian did not share the general despondency, but had an unshaken confidence in his own resources.

It was ten o'clock at night. The silver lamp suspended from the ceiling of the great hall lighted a sad and silent scene. All the doors and windows were secured; from time to time the noise of an arrow penetrating the wood or making its way between the tiles was heard. At the two ends of the hall and in front loopholes had been made in the upper part of the wall, at which the adventurers kept constant watch at night to pre vent surprise.

Dom Antônio, seated under the canopy, was snatching a moment's repose. The day had been a severe one; the Indians several times assailed the stone steps leading to the esplanade, and the nobleman, with his small force and the culverin, had succeeded in repulsing

them. His loaded carbine rested against the back of his chair, and his pistols were lying on a table within his reach. His head was drooped upon his breast, and his white hair contrasted finely with the black velvet of his doublet, covered with a fine network of steel mail that protect ed his chest. He seemed to be asleep; but now and then he raised his eyes and surveyed the large apartment, contemplating with extreme sadness the scene depicted in the halflighted rear of the hall. Then he would return to his former position and continue his sorrowful reflections. The nobleman maintained his usual firmness and courage, but in his heart he had lost hope.

On the opposite side, Cecília, reclining on a sofa, looked as though in a swoon; her countenance had lost its usual vivacity, and her light and graceful body, bent by so many emotions, lay inert on the damask quilt. Her little hand fell motionless as a flower when its delicate stalk is broken, and her pale lips moved at intervals with a murmured prayer. Kneeling at the side of the sofa, Pery kept his eyes fixed on his mistress, as though the gentle respiration with which her bosom heaved and which exhaled from her half-opened mouth were the breath that nourished his life. From the outbreak of the revolt he had not left Cecília; he followed her like a shadow; his devotion, already so astonishing, had reached the sublime as the danger became imminent. During those two days he had performed incredible things, veritable madnesses of heroism and self-sacrifice. Did it chance that a savage, drawing near the house, uttered a cry that gave the young girl the slightest fright, Pery would dart like a lightning flash, and before there was time to hold him back, pass through a cloud of arrows, reach the edge of the esplanade, and with a shot from his carbine bring down the Aymoré who had frightened his mistress, before he had time to utter a second cry. Did Cecília, sick and in distress, refuse the food her mother or her cousin brought her? Pery, running a thousand risks, in danger of being dashed to pieces on the rocks or riddled with the arrows of the savages, would gain the forest, and in an hour return with some delicate fruit, a honey-comb wrapped in flowers, a choice bit of game, which his mistress would touch with her lips that she might at least in this way repay such love and devotion.

His mad acts reached such a point that Cecília was obliged to forbid him to leave her side, and to keep him in sight lest he should at any moment rush into the very jaws of death. Aside from the friendship she felt for him, something - a vague hope - told her that in their present extremity if any salvation were found for her family, they would owe it to the courage, intelligence, and sublime self-sacrifice, of Pery. If he were to die, who would watch over her with a solicitude and ardent zeal that partook at once of the love of a mother, the protection of a father, the tenderness of a brother? Who would be her guardian angel to save her from every pain, and at the same time her slave to gratify her slightest desire?

On the same side as Cecília, but in another corner of the hall, Isabel was seated, leaning against the window-sill, gazing eagerly, with a look full of anxiety and fear, through a small opening which she had stealthily made. The ray of light that streamed through this aperture in the window served as a mark for the Indians, who showered arrow after arrow in that direction; but Isabel, lost to herself, regarded not the danger. She was looking at Álvaro, who, with the greater part of the faithful adventurers, was keeping the nightly guard at the steps. The young man was walking up and down the esplanade under cover of a slight palisade. Every arrow that passed over his head, every

movement that he made, caused in Isabel extreme suffering; she grieved that she could not be at his side to shelter him, and receive the death destined for him.

Dona Lauriana, sitting on one of the steps of the chapel, was praying. The good lady was among those who exhibited the most courage and the greatest calmness in this dreadful crisis; sustained by her religious faith, and by the noble blood that flowed in her veins, she had shown herself worthy of her husband. She did everything possible, - cared for the wounded, encouraged the girls, assisted in the preparations for defense, and at the same time directed her household affairs as if nothing had happened.

Ayres Gomes, perfectly motionless, with his arms folded upon his breast, was asleep against the door of the armory; he was guarding the post that the nobleman had confided to him. After the conference between the two, the esquire had taken up his station there, which he left only when Dom Antônio came and seated himself in the chair that stood near the door. He slept standing; but not a step, however light, fell upon the floor but he awoke abruptly, with his pistol in his grasp, and his hand on the bolt of the door.

Dom Antônio rose, and putting his pistols in his belt, and taking his carbine, went to the sofa on which his daughter was resting, and kissed her on the forehead; he did the same to Isabel, embraced his wife, and left the room. He was going to relieve Álvaro, who had been on guard since nightfall. A few moments afterward the door opened again, and the young man entered.

Álvaro had on a woolen doublet, and a rent on the shoulder, made by an arrow, exposed a streak of the scarlet lining; when he appeared in the doorway, Isabel uttered a low cry, and ran to him. “Are you wounded?” asked she, in an anxious tone, grasping his hands.

“No,” answered the young man with surprise.

“Oh!” exclaimed Isabel, breathing freely again, as she saw what had misled her.

Álvaro sought to withdraw his hands from hers; but the maiden with an entreating look drew him gently after her, and taking him to the place where she had been sitting, compelled him to sit down at her side.

Many things had occurred between them in those two days; there are circumstances under which the feelings move with an extraordinary rapidity, and swallow up months and years in a single minute. Assembled in that hall under the stress of imminent danger, seeing each other every moment, exchanging now a word, now a look, feeling themselves in short near each other, those two hearts, if they were not in love, at least understood each other.

Álvaro avoided Isabel; he was afraid of that ardent love that enveloped him in a look, of that deep and resigned passion that bowed at his feet with a melancholy smile; he felt too weak to resist, and yet his duty commanded him to resist. He loved, or thought he still loved Cecília; he had promised her father that he would be her husband; and in

the present state of affairs that promise was more than an oath, it was an imperious necessity, a decree of fate that must be fulfilled. How then could he encourage a hope in Isabel? Would it not be infamous, unworthy, to accept the love she had imploringly offered him? Was it not his duty to eradicate from her heart that impossible sentiment?

He said to himself that he did not love, that he should never love Isabel; yet he knew that if he saw her a second time as he saw her when she confessed her love for him, he should fall on his knees at her feet, and forget his duty, his honor, everything for her. The struggle was dreadful; but the noble soul of the cavalier did not yield. He might be overcome, but only after having done whatever it was possible for man to do to keep true to his promise.

What made the struggle still more violent was the fact that Isabel did not pursue him with her love; after that first madness, she withdrew within herself, and resigned herself to loving without hope of ever being loved.

IX. HOPE.

SEATING himself near the maiden, Álvaro felt his courage waver. “What do you wish of me, Isabel?” asked he, with a somewhat tremulous voice.

The young girl made no answer; she was absorbed in contemplating the young man, was sating herself with gazing on him, with feeling him near her, after having suffered the anguish of seeing death hovering over his head, and threatening his life.

“Let me look at you!” she said soon, in a tone of entreaty. “Who knows! It may be for the last time!”

“Why these sad thoughts?” said Álvaro, gently. “Hope is not yet wholly lost.”

“What of that?” exclaimed the maiden. “But a few moments ago I saw you walking up and down the esplanade, and every instant I thought an arrow was piercing you, and -”

“What! Have you been so imprudent as to open the window?” The young man turned round, and started as he saw the window half opened, and riddled on the outside with the arrows of the savages. “My God!” cried he. “Why do you expose your life in this way, Isabel?”

“Of what value is my life that I should preserve it?” said the maiden with warmth. “Has it any pleasure, any happiness, to bind me? My happiness is to follow you with my eyes, and with my thoughts. If this happiness costs me my life, be it so!”

“Do not talk so, Isabel; you rend my heart.”

“And how would you have me talk? To lie to you is impossible. Since that day when I betrayed my secret, from a slave it has become my master, a despotic and absolute master. I know that I give you pain -”

“I have never said such a thing!”

“You are too generous to say so, but you feel it. I know it, I read it in your every action. You esteem me perhaps as a sister, but you avoid me, and fear that Cecília will think you love me. Is it not so?”

“No,” exclaimed Álvaro inadvertently. “I *am* afraid, but it is of loving you!”

Isabel was so violently agitated at these words that she sat as if in a trance; the quick throbbing of her heart almost suffocated her.

Álvaro was not less moved; subdued by the love that led her to expose her life merely to follow him from a distance with her eye and protect him with her care, he bad suffered the secret of the struggle that was going on in his soul to escape. But no sooner had he pronounced those imprudent words than he recovered his self-control, and becoming cold and reserved spoke to Isabel in a grave tone.

“You know that I love Cecília, but you do not know that I have promised her father to be her husband. So long as he of his own free will does not absolve me from my promise, I am under obligation to fulfill it. As regards my love, that belongs to me, and only death can absolve me from it. If ever I were to love another woman, on that day I would pronounce sentence on myself as a faithless man.” The young man turned to Isabel with a sad smile. “And do you know what a faithless man does who still has conscience enough left to sit in judgment upon himself?”

“O, yes! I know! - It is just what a woman does who loves without hope, and whose love is an insult or a pain to him whom she loves!”

“Isabel!” cried Álvaro, alarmed at her words.

“You are right! Only death can remove a first and holy love from hearts like ours!”

“Cast aside these thoughts, Isabel! Believe me, only one consideration can justify such a desperate act.”

“What is it?” asked Isabel.

“Dishonor.”

“There is still another,” replied the maiden with excitement; “one less selfish, but as noble as that; the happiness of those we love.”

“I don’t understand you.”

“When we find that we may be the cause of suffering to those whom we regard, it is better to sever at once the cord that binds us to life than to see it gradually wear away. Did you not say that you were afraid of loving me? Very well; now I am afraid of being loved.”

Álvaro did not know what to say; his agitation was terrible; he understood Isabel, and knew the force of those fervid words that fell from her lips.

“Isabel!” said he, taking her hands in his, “if you have any affection for me, do not refuse the favor I now ask. Discard those thoughts! I entreat you!”

The maiden smiled sadly. “Do you entreat me? Do you ask me to preserve the life you have rejected? Is it not yours? Accept it, and you no longer have anything to entreat me for!”

Isabel’s ardent gaze fascinated him; he could no longer restrain himself; he rose, and bending down, stammered in her ear, “I accept it!”

Before Isabel, pale with emotion and happiness, had ceased to doubt the voice that resounded in her ear, the young man had left the hall.

While Álvaro and Isabel were conversing in a low tone, Pery had remained by the side of his mistress. He was pensive; it was evident that some thought had possession of him, and was engrossing his entire attention. At length he rose, and casting a last glance, full of sadness, on Cecília, walked slowly toward the door.

The girl made a slight movement, and raised her head. “Pery!”

He started, and turning, came back and kneeled again by the sofa.

“You promised me not to leave your mistress!” said Cecília, in a gentle tone of reproof.

“Pery wishes to save you!”

“How?”

“You shall know. Let Pery do what he has in his thought.”

“But will you run no risk?”

“Why do you ask that, mistress?” said he timidly.

“Why?” exclaimed Cecília, rising with animation. “Because if to save us it is necessary for you to die, I reject your sacrifice; I reject it in my own name and in that of my father.”

“Be at ease, mistress; Pery does not fear the enemy; he knows how to conquer him.”

The girl shook her head with an air of incredulity. “They are so many!”

The Indian smiled with pride. “Be they a thousand, Pery will conquer them all, both Indians and white men.” He pronounced these words with the natural and at the same time firm expression which is imparted by consciousness of strength and power.

Yet Cecília could not believe what she heard; it seemed to her inconceivable that a single man, though he possessed the devotion and heroism of the Indian, could conquer not only the revolted adventurers, but the two hundred Aymoré warriors who were besieging the house. She did not take into consideration the immense resources of his vigorous intellect, which had at its service a strong arm, an agile body, and an extraordinary cunning; she did not know that thought is the most powerful weapon that God has given to man, and that through its aid he can vanquish his enemies, and control the forces of nature.

“Do not deceive yourself; you contemplate a useless sacrifice. It is not possible for one man alone to overcome so many enemies, even though that man be Pery.”

“You shall see!” replied he confidently.

“And who will give you strength to contend against so great a power?”

“Who? You, mistress, you alone,” answered the Indian, fixing on her his bright eyes.

Cecília smiled, as the angels must smile. “Go,” said she, “go and save us. But remember that if you die, Cecilia will not accept the life you gave her.”

Pery rose. “The sun that rises tomorrow will be the last for all your enemies; Cecy may then smile as formerly, and be contented and happy.”

His voice became tremulous; feeling that he could not control his emotion, he crossed the hall quickly and went out. Reaching the esplanade, he looked at the stars, which were beginning to disappear, and saw that it would not be long before daybreak; he had no time to lose.

What was the plan that inspired him with such certainty of its result? What measure had he devised to compass the destruction of the enemy, and the salvation of his mistress? It would have been difficult to divine; Pery guarded carefully in the bottom of his heart that impenetrable secret, and did not tell it even to himself, for fear of betraying himself and nullifying the result, which he expected with unshaken confidence. He had the enemy in his hand, and only needed a little prudence to strike them all dead as with a thunderbolt.

He proceeded to the garden and entered Cecília's abandoned room. It was in darkness, but the dim light that entered by the window enabled him to distinguish objects perfectly; the perfection of the senses was a gift that the Indians possessed in the highest degree.

He took his weapons one by one, kissed the pistols that Cecília gave him, and threw them on the floor in the middle of the room, took off his feather ornaments, his warrior's belt, his brilliant plume, and cast them as a trophy on his weapons. Then he grasped his great war bow, clasped it to his breast, and breaking it in two on his knee, added the parts to the pile. For some time he contemplated with deep pain these relics of his savage life, these emblems of his sublime devotion to Cecília, and his wonderful heroism. While struggling with his emotions, he unconsciously murmured in his own tongue words which at such moments the soul forces to the lips: "Weapon of Pery, companion and friend, adieu! Your master abandons you and leaves you; with you he could have conquered; with you no one could have conquered him. But he wishes to be conquered -" the Indian pressed his hand upon his heart - "Yes! Pery, son of Ararê, first of his tribe, brave among the brave, a Goytacaz warrior, never conquered, is going to yield in war. Pery's weapon cannot see its master beg his life of the enemy; Ararê's bow now broken will not save his son."

His proud head fell upon his breast while he was pronouncing these words. At length he overcame his emotion, and clasping in his arms this trophy of his weapons and insignia of war, pressed them to his breast in a last farewell embrace.

The aroma from the woods of the plants beginning to open with the approach of day warned him that the night was drawing to a close. He broke the anklet which like all Indians he wore, an ornament made of small cocoa-nuts strung on a thread, and colored yellow. Pery took two of these nuts, and divided them with his knife, without entirely separating them; then closing them in his hand, he raised his arm as if offering a defiance or making a terrible threat, and rushed out of the room.

X. THE BREACH.

WHEN Pery entered Cecília's room, Loredano was walking up and down in front of the porch. The Italian was reflecting on the events of the last few days, on the vicissitudes to which his life and fortune had been subjected. At different times he had had his foot in the grave, had reached his last hour, but death had fled from and respected him. At other times he had been face to face with happiness, power, fortune, and all had vanished like a dream.

When at the head of the revolted adventurers he was on the point of attacking Dom Antônio, who could not have resisted him, the Aymoré's had suddenly made their appearance and changed the face of things. The necessity of defense against the common enemy brought about a suspension of hostilities. All the while, however, Loredano,

who had constituted himself the chief of the revolt, did not abandon his project of getting possession of Cecília and avenging himself on Dom Antônio and Álvaro. His persevering mind worked unceasingly in search of the means of reaching that result. To attack the nobleman openly would have been madness; the least struggle between them would have delivered them all into the power of the savages.

The sole barrier that restrained the Aymoré's was the impregnable position of the house, built on a rock, accessible only at one point, by the stone steps which we described in the first chapter of this story. These steps were defended by Dom Antônio and his men. The wooden bridge had been destroyed, but the savages would easily have replaced it had it not been for the desperate resistance the nobleman opposed to their attacks. If therefore Dom Antônio, drawn away to the defense of his family from Loredano, had abandoned the steps, the two hundred Aymoré warriors would at once have rushed upon the house, and no courage could have resisted them.

What Loredano was seeking was some method of putting out of the way without noise, without a struggle, without warning, Dom Antônio, Pery, Álvaro, and Ayres Gomes; this done, the rest would join him from the necessity of a common defense. He would then become master of the house, and either repulse the Indians, save Cecília, and realize all his dreams of love and happiness, or die after having at least half-drained the cup of pleasure which his lips now had not even touched.

It was impossible that such a satanic spirit, after dwelling on an idea for three days, should not have succeeded in finding some means of accomplishing its purpose. He had not only found the means, but had already begun to put his plan in practice. Everything favored him; even the enemy left him in repose, attacking only the side of the house defended by Dom Antônio. He was accordingly indulging anew in his hopes as he walked, when Martim Vaz, coming out of the porch, approached him.

"Something we did not count upon!" said the adventurer.

"What?" asked the Italian quickly.

"A closed door."

"Open it!"

"Not so easily done."

"We shall see."

"It is nailed on the inside."

"Can they have suspected?"

“That is what I have been thinking.”

Loredano made a gesture of despair. “Come!”

The two walked together to the porch, where the adventurers were sleeping under arms, ready at the first signal to attack. The Italian waked João Feio, and by way of precaution, directed him to keep guard on the esplanade, although there was no fear that the savages would attack on his side.

The adventurer, more asleep than awake, rose and went out. Loredano and his companion went on to an inner room that served as kitchen and pantry to that part of the house. When they were on the point of entering, the light that the adventurer carried in his hand suddenly went out.

“You are awkward enough!” said Loredano with some irritation.

“Am I to blame? Complain of the wind.”

“Well! Don’t waste time in words! Strike a light!”

The adventurer went back after his steel. Loredano remained standing in the doorway waiting for his companion to return, and thought he heard the breathing of a man near him. He listened to make certain, and for security drew his dagger, and placed himself so as to prevent anyone from leaving the room.

He heard nothing more; but all at once he felt the touch of a cold and icy body on his forehead; he recoiled and brandishing his knife, struck a blow in the dark. He thought he had hit something, yet everything remained in the most profound silence.

The adventurer returned with the light. “It is singular,” said he: “the wind might put out a candle, but it would n’ carry away the wick.”

“The wind, you say. Perhaps the wind has blood?”

“What do you mean?”

"That the wind that put out the candle also left its mark on this weapon.” And Loredano showed the adventurer his knife, whose point was stained with blood.

“Is there an enemy here then?”

“Certainly; friends have no need of concealing themselves.”

At this, a noise was heard, and a bat passed by moving its great wings slowly; it was wounded.

“There’s the enemy!” exclaimed Martim, laughing.

“True,” answered Loredano in the same tone; “I confess that I was afraid of a bat.”

At ease respecting the incident that had delayed them, the two entered the kitchen, and from this through a narrow opening made in the wall penetrated into the interior of the house, shortly before occupied by Dom Antônio and his family. They crossed a portion of the building, and reached a balcony that touched Cecília’s room on one side and on the other the chapel and armory.

There the adventurer stopped, and showing Loredano the paneled rosewood door that afforded entrance into the armory, said, “We shall not easily break it down!”

Loredano approached, and saw that the solidity and strength of the door did not permit the least violence; his plan was overthrown. He had expected during the night to introduce himself secretly into the hall, and assassinate Dom Antônio, Ayres Gomes, and Álvaro before their supporters could come o their rescue: this crime consummated he would be master of the house.

How was he to remove the obstacle that now presented itself? The least violence against the door would arouse the attention of Dom Antônio.

While this reflection was running through his mind, his eyes fell upon a narrow aperture in the wall of the chapel at the top, which served rather to admit air than light. Through this opening the Italian saw that that part of the wail was single, and made of but one tier of brick. In fact, the chapel had formerly been a broad corridor, running from the balcony to the hall, and had been partitioned off by a thin partition.

Loredano surveyed the wall from top to bottom, and nodded to his companion. “Here’s where we must enter,” said he, pointing to the wall.

“How? A mosquito could scarcely pass through that crack!”

“This wall rests upon a beam; remove that, and the way is open!”

“I see.”

“Before they can recover from their fright, we shall have accomplished our work.”

The adventurer with the point of his knife scraped off the mortar from the wall, and laid bare the beam that served for a foundation.

“Well?”

“All right. Two hours from now I will have everything ready.”

Martim Vaz, since the death of Ruy Soeiro and Bento Simões, had become Loredano’s right arm; he was the only one to whom the Italian had confided his secret, which he kept concealed from the others, because he still feared the influence of Dom Antônio over them.

The Italian left the adventurer at his work, and returned by the way he came.

When he reached the kitchen, he was almost suffocated by a dense cloud of smoke that filled the whole porch. The adventurers, suddenly awakened, were cursing the author of the mischief.

While Loredano was searching for the cause of this occurrence, João Feio appeared at the entrance of the porch. His countenance wore a terrible expression, at once of anger and fear; at a single leap he reached the Italian’s side, and whispered in his ear: “Apostate! reprobate! I give you an hour to surrender yourself to Dom Antônio, and obtain from him our pardon and your own punishment. If you do not do it within that time, you will have me to deal with.”

The Italian was bursting with rage, but restrained himself. “Friend, the night air has turned your head; go and lie down. Good night, - or rather, good morning.”

The first rays of dawn were beginning to appear on the horizon.

XI. THE FRIAR.

ON leaving Cecília’s room, Pery had passed along the corridor that communicated with the interior of the building. The Indian, whose keen observation nothing that occurred in the house, however insignificant, escaped, had fathomed Loredano’s plan with the first blow struck to effect the opening.

The evening before, the sound of implements on the wall had attracted his attention, as he was reposing for a moment in the hall at the foot of his mistress’s bed; he had applied his acute ear to the floor and listened. He sprang up, and passing entirely through the building, guided by the blows, reached the place where Loredano and the adventurer were beginning to open a passage through the wall.

Instead of being alarmed at this new audacity, he smiled; the opening Loredano was making would be his ruin, because it would afford an easy passage to Pery. He contented himself, therefore, with examining all the doors that communicated with the hall, and nailing them up on the inside; this would present a new obstacle to delay the adventurers, and would give him time and to spare to exterminate them.

Hence it was that he went directly from Cecília's room, whose door he fastened behind him, to the opening, and through it penetrated to the adventurers' pantry.

It was a room of some size, containing a table, together with a number of jars and a large cask of wine; Pery, notwithstanding the darkness, went to each one of these vessels, and for some moments the gentle agitation of the liquor they contained was heard.

Then he saw a light approaching; it was Loredano and his companion. The sight of the Italian froze the blood in his heart. Such hatred did he entertain for that abject and vile man that he was afraid of himself, afraid of killing him. That would now have been unwise it would have frustrated all his plans. Frequently since the night when Loredano entered Cecília's room, Pery had felt impelled to avenge the insult to his mistress in the Italian's blood, for whom he thought one death was not sufficient punishment. But he remembered that he did not belong to himself, - that he needed life to consummate his work of saving Cecília from the numerous foes that surrounded her, and repressed the thought of vengeance. He did the same thing now. Pressing against the wall he put out the candle, and started to leave the room, when he found that the Italian had taken possession of the door.

He hesitated. He might have sprung upon Loredano and overcome him, but that would have caused a struggle, and betrayed his presence; it was necessary for him to escape without leaving any token of his flight. The slightest suspicion would have rendered his design abortive.

He conceived a happy idea, and raising his damp hand, touched the Italian's face; as the latter stepped back to strike, the Indian slipped between him and the door. Loredano's knife had wounded his left arm, but he uttered no groan, made no movement that would betray him, and gained the rear of the porch before the adventurer returned with the light.

But Pery was not satisfied; his blood would betray him, and it was highly important that the Italian should not suspect that he had been there. The bats fluttering, frightened, about the porch suggested an excellent expedient; he caught the first that came within the reach of his arm, and making an incision with his knife let it go. He knew that the creature would fly to the light and hover around the two adventurers, and he expected that the drops of blood that fell from its wounded wing would mislead them.

As soon as Loredano disappeared, Pery pursued the execution of his plan. He went to the corner of the porch, where some embers were smouldering, and threw them upon some clothing that had been left there to dry. This incident, insignificant as it may appear, formed part of his plan; the burning clothes would fill the house with smoke, awake the adventurers, and excite their thirst. This was just what he wanted. Satisfied with what he had thus far accomplished, he crossed the esplanade, but there started back with surprise.

One of Dom Antônio's men and one of the revolted adventurers were conversing across the stockade that separated the two hostile camps. Not only was this contrary to the express orders of Dom Antônio, who had prohibited all intercourse between his men and the revolters, but it was opposed to the plan of Loredano, who still feared the nobleman's influence over the adventurers.

What had previously taken place explained this extraordinary occurrence. The adventurer whom Loredano had ordered to patrol the esplanade while he went in had begun his circuit from one point to another of the courtyard. As often as he drew near the stockade, he noticed that on the other side a man approached like him, turned, and moved away along the edge of the esplanade.

João Feio was a free and jovial companion, and could not endure the tedium of a walk at dead of night, just from a sound sleep, without a drop to drink or without a comrade to talk to. To his still greater disgust, on one occasion as he approached the stockade he inhaled the scent of tobacco, and saw that his companion on guard was smoking.

He put his hand in his breeches pocket and found a few pieces of tobacco, but he had not his pipe with him. He became desperate, and resolved to speak to the other. "Hallo, friend!

Are you on guard, too?"

The man turned, and kept on his way without answering.

At the second round the adventurer threw out a second bait.

"Fortunately, it is nearly daylight; does n't it look so to you?"

The same silence as the first time. Nevertheless the adventurer was not discouraged, and at the third meeting added, -

"We are enemies, comrade, but that does not prevent a polite man from answering when he is spoken to."

This time the silent sentinel turned completely round.

"Before politeness stands our holy religion, which forbids every Christian to speak to a heretic, a reprobate, a hypocrite."

"What does that mean? Are you in earnest, or are you trying to enrage me with trifles?"

"I am as much in earnest as if I were before our Holy Redeemer confessing my sins."

"Well then, I tell you, you lie! You may be as good a Christian as I, but none better exists."

“Your tongue is a little too long, friend. But Beelzebub will have a reckoning with you, not I; I should lose my soul if I touched the body of sinners!”

“By St. John Baptist, my patron saint, do not provoke me to leap over this stockade, and demand the reason why you scoff at the devotion of others. Call us rebels, but heretics never.”

“And how then would you have me call the companions of an impious and accursed friar, who has abjured his vows and thrown his habit to the dogs.”

“A friar, did you say?”

“Yes, a friar. Did n't you know it?”

“Who? What friar do you mean?”

“The Italian, of course.”

“The Italian!”

The man, who was none other than our old acquaintance, Master Nunes, then related what he knew of Loredano’s history, exaggerated by the fervor of his religious feelings. The horrified adventurer, quivering with rage, did not let Master Nunes finish his story, but rushed to the porch, and made the threat to the Italian that we have heard; while Pery leaped over the stockade, and went to the room he had shortly before left.

The day was then breaking; the first rays of the sun already illuminated the camp of the Aymorés on the plain by the margin of the river. The excited savages were eying the house, with gestures of rage at not being able to overcome the barrier of stone that defended the enemy.

Pery looked for a moment at those men of gigantic stature and dreadful aspect, - those two hundred warriors of prodigious strength, fierce as tigers. He muttered to himself: “Today they will all fall like a tree in the forest, never to rise again.”

He sat down in the window and leaning his head on his arm began to reflect. The gigantic work he had undertaken, a work that seemed to exceed the power of man, was ready for accomplishment. He had already performed half of it; the completion was wanting, the most difficult and delicate part. Before setting out he wished to consider the matter carefully, -to fix in his mind the slightest circumstances, to mark out an unswerving course, that he might proceed firmly, directly, unerringly, to the goal be had in view, that there might not be the least hesitation to put at hazard the result of his scheme.

His mind ran through a world of thought in a few seconds; guided by his marvelous instinct and his noble heart, he marked out in an instant a great and terrible drama of heroism and devotion, which to him seemed merely the fulfillment of a duty and the satisfaction of a desire. Great souls have this immunity; the acts that in others excite admiration in them seem insignificant, in presence of an innate nobility and superiority of heart to which everything is natural and possible.

When Pery raised his head, he was radiant with happiness and pride; happiness at the thought of saving his mistress; pride in the consciousness that he alone was able to do what fifty men could not do; what neither her own father nor her lover could ever accomplish. He had no further doubts of the result. He looked into the coming events as into the space that stretched before him, in which not a single object escaped his clear vision. As far as possible to man, he had the certainty and conviction that Cecília was safe.

He covered his breast and back with a snake skin, which he bound tightly around his body; put on over it his cotton tunic; tried the muscles of his arms and legs, and feeling strong, agile, and lithe, went out unarmed.

XII. DISOBEDIENCE.

ÁLVARO, leaning against the outside of one of the windows, was thinking of Isabel. His soul was still struggling, but now only feebly, against the deep and ardent love that swayed him: he sought to deceive himself, but his reason refused its assent. He knew that he loved Isabel, and that he loved her as he never had loved Cecília; his former calm and serene affection had been replaced by a burning passion. His noble heart rebelled against this truth, but his will was impotent against his love; he could no longer tear it from his heart, nor did he even wish to. Yet he suffered; what he had said the evening before to Isabel was what he actually felt; he had not exaggerated; on the day he ceased to love Cecília and became untrue to his promise to Dom Antônio, he would condemn himself as a man without faith and without honor.

He consoled himself with the thought that the present situation of affairs could not last much longer; it would not be long before, exhausted and weakened, they would have to yield to the enemy. Then, in his last moments, on the edge of the grave, when death had already detached him from earth, he might, with his last breath stammer the first word of his love; might confess to Isabel that he loved her. Until then he would resist.

At this point Pery touched him on the shoulder. “Pery is going away.”

“Where?”

“Far away.”

“What are you going to do?”

The Indian hesitated. “Obtain succor.”

Álvaro smiled incredulously.

“Do you doubt?”

“Not you, but the succor.”

“Listen: if Pery does not return, you will have his weapons buried?”

“You may go without misgivings: I promise you.”

“Another thing.”

“What is it?”

The Indian hesitated again. “If you see Pery’s head severed from his body, bury it with his weapons.”

“Why this request? What means such an idea?”

“Pery is going through the midst of the savages, and may die. You are a warrior, and know that life is like the palm tree, withered when everything else is growing green again.”

“You are right. I will do what you ask, but I hope to see you again.”

“Love mistress,” said the Indian, extending his hand to the young man. His adieu was a last prayer for Cecília’s happiness.

Pery entered the hall, where the family was now gathered. They were all asleep except Dom Antônio, who was always awake, despite his age; his powerful will lent him new strength, and reanimated his body, worn by years. He had but one hope left, that of dying surrounded by the beings he loved, in the midst of his family, as a Portuguese nobleman should die, with honor and courage.

The Indian crossed the room, and stopping near the sofa on which Cecília was sleeping, contemplated her for a moment with a feeling of deep melancholy. One would have said that in that ardent gaze he was saying a last solemn farewell; that on taking his departure the faithful and devoted slave wished to leave his soul wrapped in that image, which represented his divinity on earth. What sublime language did not those intelligent eyes, animated by a brilliant reflection of love and fidelity, speak? What an epic of sentiment and self-denial was there not in that mute and respectful contemplation?

At last he made a final effort, and with difficulty broke the charm that held him motionless as a statue before that pretty sleeping girl. He bent over the sofa, and kissed respectfully the hem of her garment. When he rose, a sad and silent tear coursing down his cheek fell upon her hand. Cecília, feeling that burning drop, half opened her eyes, but Pery did not see this movement, for be had already turned away and was going toward Dom Antônio. The nobleman, seated in his arm-chair, received him with a painful smile.

“Do you suffer?” asked the Indian.

“For them, especially for her, my Cecília.”

“Not for yourself?” said Pery, with a purpose.

“For myself? I would give my life to save her, and die happy!”

“Give, if she asked you to live?”

“Though she entreated me on her knees.”

The Indian felt relieved, as from a burden of remorse. “May Pery ask something of you?”

“Speak.”

“Pery wishes to kiss your hand.”

Dom Antônio took off his gauntlet, and without understanding the reason of the request, extended his hand.

“You will tell Cecília that Pery has departed, that he has gone far away; you must not tell her the truth, she will suffer. Adieu; Pery grieves to leave you, but it is necessary.”

While he was whispering these words, the nobleman was trying to gather their meaning, which seemed to him vague and confused. “What do you intend to do, Pery?” he asked.

“What you expressed a willingness to do, in order to save mistress.”

“Die!” exclaimed the nobleman.

Pery raised his finger to his lips to enjoin silence, but it was too late; a cry from the corner of the room startled him. He turned and saw Cecília, who, on hearing her father’s last word, had essayed to run to him, but had fallen on her knees, without strength to take a step. The girl, with her hands outstretched in suppliant attitude, seemed to be entreating her father to prevent that heroic sacrifice, and to save Pery from a voluntary death.

The nobleman understood her. “No, Pery; I, Dom Antônio de Mariz, shall never consent to such a thing. If the death of any one could save my Cecília and my family, the sacrifice would belong to me. And before God and on my honor, I swear that I will yield it to no one: whoever should seek to rob me of this right, would put upon me a cruel insult.”

Pery turned his eyes from his afflicted and suppliant mistress to the nobleman, stern and unyielding in the performance of his duty; he feared those two opposing influences, so different in character, yet both exercising a great power over his soul. Could the slave resist the entreaty of his mistress and cause her pain, when his whole life had been devoted to making her cheerful and happy? Could the friend offend Dom Antônio, whom he respected, by an act that the nobleman would consider a wrong to his honor? He had an attack of dizziness, during which his heart seemed to stop in his breast, and his head to fly apart with the violent pressure of the tumultuous thoughts that coursed through his brain.

During the brief moment that the vertigo lasted, he saw revolving rapidly around him the sinister figures of the Aymorés, threatening the precious lives of those he loved best. He saw Cecília entreating not him but a ferocious and bloodthirsty savage, ready to contaminate her with his impure hands; he saw the handsome and noble head of the aged nobleman dragged mutilated in the dust, its white hair stained with blood. Horror-stricken by these gloomy images, the Indian clasped his head in his hands as if to snatch it from the fever.

“Pery!” stammered Cecília, “your mistress entreats you!”

“We will all die together, my friend, when the moment comes,” said Dom Antônio.

Pery raised his head and turned upon the maiden and the nobleman a wild look. “No!” cried he.

Cecília rose instantly to her feet; pale, haughty in her indignation, the gentle and lovely girl of a moment before had been suddenly transformed into an imperious queen. Her white forehead glowed with an expression of pride; her blue eyes showed a tawny reflection, like that which illuminates the clouds in the midst of a tempest; her lips, quivering and slightly arched, seemed to hold back the word to let it fall in all its force.

Throwing her fair head over her left shoulder in an energetic manner, she extended her hand toward Pery.

“I forbid you to leave this house!”

The Indian had almost fallen at his mistress’s feet, but drew back oppressed and panting. A song - or rather a cry- of the savages sounded in the distance. Pery took a step toward the door, but Dom Antônio held him back.

“Your mistress,” said the nobleman coldly, “has given you an order; you must obey it. Quiet yourself, my daughter; Pery is my prisoner.”

At these words, which destroyed all his hopes, and rendered it impossible for him to save his mistress, the Indian freed himself from the nobleman's grasp and sprang into the middle of the room.

"Pery is free!" cried he, beside himself. "Pery obeys no one any more; he will do what his heart bids him!"

While Dom Antônio and Cecília, astonished at his first act of disobedience, were looking at him in amazement, as he stood in the center of the spacious room, he sprang to a rack, and grasping a heavy two-handed sword as if it had been a toy, ran to the window and leaped out.

"Pardon Pery, mistress!"

Cecília shrieked, and sprang to the window. Pery was no longer in sight.

Álvaro and the adventurers, standing on the esplanade, had their eyes fixed on a tree growing on the opposite declivity, the foliage of which was still agitated.

At a distance lay the camp of the Aymorés; the passing breeze brought the confused noise of the voices and cries of the savages.

XIII. THE COMBAT.

IT was six o'clock in the morning.

The sun rising in the horizon diffused cascades of gold over the bright green of the vast forests. The weather was superb, the blue sky enameled with little white clouds that undulated like the folds of a linen garment.

The Aymorés, grouped around some logs already half reduced to ashes, were making preparations for a decisive attack. Savage instinct supplied the place of the industry of civilized man; the first of arts was unquestionably the art of war, the art of defense and of revenge - the two strongest motives of the human heart. They were preparing inflammable arrows to set fire to the house. Unable to conquer the enemy by force of arms, they expected to destroy him by fire.

The manner of preparing these terrible projectiles was very simple: they merely wrapped the point in cotton soaked in gum-mastic. The arrows, thus rendered inflammable, ignited as they flew through the air, and set fire to the buildings they struck.

While they were busy with this work a savage pleasure lighted up the sinister countenances of the Aymorés, from which ferocity, ignorance, and thirst for blood, had almost wholly blotted out the human type. Their neglected hair

fell over their foreheads, and entirely concealed the noblest part of the visage, created by God as the seat of intelligence and the throne from which the mind is to reign over matter. Their misshapen lips, drawn back by a contraction of the facial muscles, had lost the soft and pleasing expression that laughter and speech impart; from human lips they had been transformed into the mandibles of the beast, accustomed to cries and roars. Their teeth, sharp as the fangs of a jaguar, no longer retained the enamel nature had given them, - weapons as well as instruments of mastication, blood had tinged them with the yellowish hue that the teeth of carnivorous animals have. Their long, black, and hooked nails, the rough and callous skin, made their bands rather terrible claws than the members designed to minister to the wants of man.

Skins of animals covered the gigantic bodies of these children of the woods, who, but for their erect posture, might have been considered some species of quadrumana indigenous to the new world. Some were ornamented with feathers and collars of bones; others, completely naked, had their bodies anointed with oil to keep off the insects.

Among them all an aged warrior, who appeared to be the chief of the tribe, was conspicuous. His lofty stature, erect despite his years, towered above the heads of his companions sitting or standing in groups around the fire. He did not work; he merely presided over the labors of the savages, and from time to time turned a menacing look toward the house standing at a distance upon the impregnable rock.

At his side a handsome girl was burning in a hollow stone some tobacco leaves, the smoke of which, rising in great spirals, enveloped the old man’s head like a cloud. He inhaled the intoxicating aroma, which caused his immense chest to expand, and imparted to his terrible countenance a sensual expression. Enveloped in the thick smoke that gathered about it, that grotesque figure might have been taken for an idol, - a divinity created by the superstition of that ignorant and barbarous people.

Suddenly the girl started, raised her head, and fixed her eyes on the old man as if questioning his countenance. Seeing him calm and unmoved, she leaned over his shoulder, and touching him lightly on the head, whispered a word in his ear. He turned quickly and a sardonic smile revealed his teeth; without answering, he made the girl seat herself again and return to her occupation.

A short time elapsed, when she again started; she had heard near by the noise which she before heard at a distance. In a second one of the savages sitting at work around the fire raised his head. As if an electric current were running from man to man, and imparting to all successively the same movement, one after another suddenly interrupted his work and listened. The girl did not merely listen; standing away from the smoke and against the breeze, from time to time she inhaled the air with the same keen sense of smell with which hounds scent the game.

All this passed rapidly, without time for the actors in this scene even to exchange a word or express their thoughts. Suddenly the girl gave a shriek; they all turned to her and saw her trembling and panting, with one hand resting on

the shoulder of the aged cazique and the other extended in the direction of the forest, which, at the distance of a few yards, formed the background to this picture.

The old man rose, maintaining the same savage and sinister calmness, and grasping his heavy *tagapema*, resembling the club of a cyclops, whirled it around his head like a reed; then fixing it in the ground and leaning on it, waited.

The other savages, armed with bows and *tacapes*, a sort of long wooden swords that cut like steel, gathered about him, and ready for the attack, like him, waited. The women mingled with the warriors; the children, defended by the barrier formed by the combatants, remained in the center of the camp. All with fixed eyes and senses alert were expecting every moment to see the enemy appear, and were preparing to fall upon him with the boldness and vigor of attack characteristic of the Aymorés.

A second passed in this anxious expectation. The noise that they had at first heard ceased entirely, and the savages, recovering from their first fear, returned to their work, convinced that they had been deceived by some idle sound in the forest.

But the enemy fell in the midst of them so suddenly that they could not tell whether he had risen from the bosom of the earth or descended from the clouds. It was Pery.

Proud, noble, radiant with the invincible courage and sublime heroism of which he had already given so many proofs, he appeared alone before two hundred powerful foes thirsting for revenge.

Leaping down from a tree above them, he struck down two of them, and swinging his sword like lightning around his head, opened a circle in the midst of his enemies. Then he backed up against a rock standing on an undulation in the ground, and prepared for the monstrous combat of a single man against two hundred. The situation was favorable to him, if there could be a favorable situation in view of the great disparity of numbers; only two could attack him in front.

After the first moment of consternation, the savages, with wild cries, threw themselves in a single mass, like a wave of the sea, upon the Indian who dared to attack them openly. There was a confusion, a dreadful whirlwind of men jostling each other, falling and twisting; of heads rising and disappearing; of arms and backs moving and contracting, as if they were all parts of a single body, members of some unknown monster writhing in convulsions.

In the midst of this chaos Pery's sword gleamed and sparkled in the sunlight, waving to and fro with the rapidity of lightning. A chorus of cries, imprecations, and hoarse and stifled groans, mingled with the shock of arms, rose from the pandemonium, and was lost in the distance in the noise of the water-fall.

There was a foreboding calm; the savages, motionless with consternation and rage, suspended their attack the bodies of the dead formed a barrier between them and the enemy. Pery lowered his sword and waited; his right arm fatigued

by its enormous exertions could serve him no longer, and fell nerveless at his side; he transferred the weapon to his left hand.

It was time. The aged cazique of the Aymorés advanced upon him, brandishing his immense club studded with fish-scales and the teeth of animals - a terrible weapon, which his powerful arm wielded as if it had been an arrow. Pery's eyes gleamed; standing erect, he fastened on the savage that unerring look that never deceived him.

The old man, drawing near, raised his club, and whirling it about his head, made ready to bring it down upon his enemy, and crush him; no sword could have resisted the shock.

But as he was on the point of letting it fall, Pery's sword flashed in the air and severed his hand; hand and club rolled together in the dust.

The savage gave forth a roar that reverberated through the forest, and lifting up his mutilated arm, sprinkled the drops of blood that flowed from it upon the Aymorés, as if calling upon them for vengeance. The warriors sprang to avenge their chief; but a new spectacle was presented to their eyes.

Pery, having overcome the cazique, looked around him, and seeing the slaughter he had made, the bodies of the Aymorés piled one above another, thrust the point of his sword into the ground, and breaking the blade, took the two pieces and threw them into the river.

A silent but terrible struggle followed within him. He had broken his sword because he did not wish to fight any longer, and had decided that it was time to beg for his life. But when the time came to make the entreaty, he felt that he was demanding of himself something superhuman, - something beyond his strength.

He, Pery, the invincible warrior; he, the free savage, the lord of the forests, the king of this virgin land, the chief of the most valiant nation of the Guaranys, beg his life of the enemy! It was impossible.

Three times he essayed to kneel, and three times his legs refused to bend. Finally, the thought of Cecília was stronger than his will. He knelt.

XIV. THE PRISONER.

AS the savages rushed forward upon the enemy, who no longer made any defense, but confessed himself vanquished, the aged cazique advanced, and laying his hand on Pery's shoulder, made an energetic motion with his mutilated right arm. This motion signified that Pery was his prisoner: that he belonged to him, as the first who had put his hand upon him, as his conqueror, and that all must respect his right of property - his war right.

The savages lowered their weapons and stood still. This barbarous people had its customs and its laws, and one of them was the exclusive right of the conqueror to his prisoner taken in war, - the right of the strong over the weak. They held in such estimation the glory of bringing a captive from the fight, and sacrificing him with the customary ceremonies, that they never killed a prostrate foe.

When Pery saw the action of the cazique and its effect, his countenance lighted up; the feigned humility, the suppliant attitude, that by a great effort he had assumed, disappeared at once.

He rose, and with a proud disdain, extended his hands to the savages, who, at the command of their chief, were preparing to bind his arms. He seemed rather a king giving orders to his vassals than a captive subject to his conquerors, such was the haughtiness of his carriage and the contempt with which he looked upon the enemy.

The Aymorés, after tying the prisoner's hands, led him some distance to the shade of a tree, and there bound him with a cotton cord of many colors,

which the Guaranys called *mussurana*. Afterward, while the women were burying the dead, the warriors met in council under the presidency of the aged cazique, to whom all listened with respect, giving their opinions each in his turn.

In the meantime the girl selected the choicest fruits and drinks, and offered them to the prisoner, whom she had been appointed to serve.

Pery, seated at the foot of the tree, with his back resting against the trunk, took no note of what was going on around him; his eyes were fixed on the esplanade.

He saw the face of Dom Antônio above the palisade, and hanging on his arm, leaning over the precipice, Cecília, his beautiful mistress, making a sign of despair to him from the distance; at their side Álvaro and the family. All that he had loved in this world was there before his eyes; he experienced an intense pleasure in seeing again these objects of his extreme devotion, his deep love.

He knew well what feeling then held possession of the hearts of his good friends; he knew that they were pained at seeing him a prisoner about to die, without having the power to save him from the enemy. But he was consoled by the hope now to be realized, by the ineffable joy of saving his mistress, and leaving her happy in the bosom of her family protected by Álvaro's love.

While Pery, engrossed by these thoughts, was reveling once more in the contemplation, though distant, of Cecília's form, the Indian girl standing before him was eying him with a feeling of pleasure mingled with surprise and curiosity. She compared his slender and delicate form with the savage bodies of her companions; the intelligent

expression of his countenance with the brutish aspect of the Aymoré's; for her, Pery was a superior man who excited her profound admiration.

It was only when Cecília and Dom Antônio disappeared from the esplanade that Pery, looking around to see whether his death would be much longer delayed, discovered the girl near him. He turned away his face, and fell anew to thinking of his mistress and contemplating her image. The savage maiden in vain presented to him a choice fruit, a tempting drink; he gave no heed to her.

She became sad because of the obstinacy with which he refused what she offered, and stepping to his side lifted up her pensive head. There was so much fire in her eyes, so much lasciviousness in her smile, the motions of her body betrayed so much desire and voluptuousness, that the prisoner knew at once what was the mission of this envoy of death, this bride of the tomb, designed to charm the last moments of his life. He turned away his face in scorn, refused the flowers as he had refused the fruit, and thrust aside the intoxication of pleasure as he had thrust aside the intoxication of wine.

The maiden clasped him in her arms, murmuring disconnected words in an unknown tongue, in the language of the Aymorés, which Pery did not understand. Perhaps it was an entreaty or a consolation with which she sought to mitigate the sorrow of the vanquished. She little knew that he would die happy, and was looking forward to death as the realization of a pleasing dream, as the fulfillment of a long cherished desire. Could she, a poor savage, divine or even comprehend such a thing? She only knew that the prisoner was destined to die; that it was her duty to soothe his last hour, and that she fulfilled that duty with a certain satisfaction.

Pery, feeling her arms around his neck, threw her violently from him, and turned to see whether he could discover through the leaves the preparations that the Aymorés were making for the sacrifice. The supreme moment when he was to be immolated to the vengeance of the enemy seemed long in coming; his pride revolted against the humiliation of captivity.

The girl continued to gaze sadly upon him, without understanding why he rejected her. She was pretty and sought for by all the young warriors of her tribe; her father, the aged cazique, had destined her to be the bride of the most valiant prisoner or the most powerful of the conquerors.

After remaining long in that position, she advanced again, took a vessel full of *canim*[31], and presented it to Pery with a smile and almost an entreaty. At the gesture of refusal he made, she threw the vessel into the river, and selecting the red fruit of the *urumbeba*[32], sweet as a honeycomb, touched the prisoner's mouth with it. He rejected the fruit as he had rejected the wine, and the maiden throwing it in its turn into the river approached and offered her rosy lips. The Indian closed his eyes and thought of Cecília, his thought threw off its earthly envelope, and hovered in an atmosphere pure and exempt from the fascination of the senses that enslaves man. Yet he felt the hot breath of the maiden burning his cheeks. He half-opened his eyes and saw her still in the same position, waiting for a caress,

some mark of affection from him whom her tribe had bidden her to love, and whom she already loved spontaneously. In savage life, so near to nature, sentiment springs up like the flower of the field, and grows in a few hours upon a drop of dew and a ray of the sun. In civilized society, on the contrary, sentiment becomes an exotic plant, and only flourishes in hothouses, that is, in hearts in which the fires of passion burn with an intense heat.

But Pery, cold and indifferent, was not moved, and did not accept this ephemeral affection which had begun with the day and was destined to end with it; his fixed idea, the recollection of his friends, protected him against temptation. Turning his back he raised his eyes to the sky to avoid the maiden's face, which followed his look as certain flowers follow the sun.

In the foliage one of those pretty and simple scenes was being enacted, that every moment in the country are presented to the attention of those who study nature. A pair of *corrixos*[33] that had built their nest on a branch, seeing the habitation of man and the fire under the tree, were moving their little house of straw and cotton. One took down the nest with its bill, and the other carried the straw away to the place where they were going to build it anew; when they had finished this work they caressed each other, and flew away to conceal their love in some pretty retreat.

Pery was diverting himself by watching this innocent idyl, when the girl suddenly rising uttered a low cry of joy and pleasure, and with a smile pointed to the two little birds flying side by side over the dome of the forest. While he was trying to understand that sign, she disappeared and returned almost immediately with a sharp stone instrument and a war-bow. She approached the Indian, untied the knots that bound his hands, and severed the *mussurana* that confined him to the tree. She did all this with extraordinary rapidity, and giving Pery the bow and arrows, extended her hand in the direction of the forest, pointing out to him the space that opened before them.

Her eyes and her action spoke better than her language and expressed her thought clearly: "You are free. Let us go!"

PART FOURTH:

THE CATASTROPHE

I. REPENTANCE.

WHEN Loredano left João Feio threatening him, he called four comrades in whom he had especial confidence, and retired with them to the pantry. He fastened the door to cut off communication with the adventurers, and to secure an opportunity of transacting quietly the business he had in mind.

In that brief moment he had modified his plan of action; the threatening words just uttered showed him that discontent was beginning to spring up. Now, the Italian was not the man to retreat before an obstacle, and submit to being robbed of the hope he had so long cherished. He determined to act promptly and carry out his purpose that very day: six strong and fearless men were enough to carry his enterprise to a successful issue.

Having fastened the door, he conducted the four adventurers to the place where Martim Vaz was at work, undermining the wall that separated them from the family.

“Friends,” said the Italian, “we are in a desperate situation; we have not strength to resist the savages, and sooner or later we must succumb.”

The adventurers hung down their heads and made no reply; they knew that what he said was the sad truth.

“The death that awaits us is dreadful; we shall serve as food for these barbarians, who eat human flesh; our bodies without burial will gratify the savage instincts of this horde of cannibals!”

An expression of horror overspread the faces of those men, who felt a cold shudder run through their limbs and penetrate their very marrow.

Loredano suffered his keen look to rest for a moment on their distorted countenances. “I have, however, a way of saving you.”

“What is it?” asked all, with one voice.

“Wait. I can save you, but that is not saying that I am disposed to do it.”

“Why not?”

“Because - because every service has its price.”

“What do you demand, then?” said Martim Vaz.

“I demand that you follow me, that you obey me blindly, happen what may.”

“You may be at ease on that point,” said one of the adventurers. “I answer for my comrades.”

“Yes!” cried the others.

“Very well. Do you know what we are going to do now, this very minute?”

“No, but you must tell us.”

“Listen! We are going to finish tearing down this wall, and then enter the hall, and kill everybody we find there, except one person.”

“And that person -”

“Is the daughter of Dom Antônio de Mariz, - Cecília. If either of you wish the other, he may take her; I give her to you.”

“And after that?”

“We will take possession of the house, assemble our comrades, and attack the Aymorés.”

“But that will not save us,” retorted one of the adventurers. “You have just told us that we have not strength to resist them.”

“Certainly!” assented Loredano. “We are not going to resist them, but save ourselves.”

“How?” said the adventurers, in a distrustful tone.

The Italian smiled.

“When I mentioned attacking the enemy, I did not speak clearly. I meant that the others would attack them.”

“I do not understand you yet; speak more clearly.”

“Here you have it, then. We will divide our men into two bands: we and some others will form one of them, which will be under my immediate command.”

“So far, so good.”

“Then one of the bands will make a sortie, while the rest attack the savages from the rock; it is an old stratagem with which you must be acquainted, - to place the enemy between two fires.”

“Go on; continue.”

“As the sortie involves the most peril, I take it upon myself; you will accompany me. Only instead of marching upon the enemy, we will proceed to the nearest settlement.”

“Oh!” exclaimed the adventurers.

“Under pretense that the savages may cut us off from the house for some days, we will take provisions with us. We will journey without stopping, without looking back, and I promise you that we shall save ourselves.”

“A treachery!” cried one of the adventurers. “Deliver our comrades into the hands of the enemy!”

“What would you have? The death of some is necessary to the life of the others; such is the way of this world. We are not called upon to correct it; let us go along with it.”

“Never! We will not do this. It is a base act!”

“Very well,” replied Loredano coldly, “do what you please. Remain. When you repent, it will be too late.”

“But listen -”

“No; no longer count upon me. I thought I was talking to men who valued their lives. I see I was mistaken. Adieu.”

“If it were not an act of treachery -”

“What do you say about treachery?” replied the Italian loftily. “Tell me, do you believe a single one will escape from here as matters now stand? We shall perish to a man. If, then, this is so, it is better that some should be saved.”

The adventurers seemed shaken by this argument.

“They, themselves,” continued Loredano, “unless they are wholly selfish will have no right to complain, and will die with a feeling of satisfaction that their death was useful to their comrades, and not barren, as it must be, if we all remain here with folded arms.”

“Be it so: you bring forward reasons that cannot be withstood. Count upon us,” said an adventurer.

“Yet I shall always have a feeling of remorse,” said another.

“We will have a mass said for their souls.”

“A good idea!” replied Loredano.

The adventurers went to the assistance of their comrade in the silent demolition of the wall, and Loredano remained apart in a corner.

For some time he followed with his eyes the work of the five men; then he took off a wide girdle made of steel plates, which clasped his doublet. On the inside of this belt there was a narrow opening, from which he drew a parchment doubled lengthwise; it was the famous guide to the silver mines. At sight of this paper his whole past pictured itself in his memory, not to cause remorse, but to incite him to persevere in the search for that treasure which belonged to him, but which he had not been able to enjoy.

He was drawn from his reverie by one of the adventurers, who had approached him unperceived, and who, after looking at the paper for a considerable time, said, -

“We cannot remove the wall.”

“Why?” asked Loredano rising. “Is it too firm?”

“That is not it; one push is enough, - but the chapel?”

“What’s the matter with the chapel?”

“What’s the matter? The saints, the blessed images, are not a thing to be thrown on the ground! If such an accursed temptation should seize us, we would pray God to deliver us from it.”

Loredano, rendered desperate by this new obstacle, whose force he felt, began to walk up and down. “Fools!” muttered he. “A fragment of wood and a little clay are enough to turn them back! And yet they call them men! Animals without intelligence, that have n’t even the instinct of self-preservation!”

Some moments elapsed; the adventurers paused, awaiting the determination of their chief.

“You are afraid of touching the saints,” said Loredano, advancing to them; “very well, I will throw the wall down. Keep on, and let me know when it is time.”

In the meantime the rest of the adventurers, who had remained in the porch, heard João Feio relate the disclosures of Master Nunes. When they knew that Loredano was a friar who had abjured his vows, they rose in a rage, and wanted to find him and tear him to pieces.

“What are you going to do?” cried the adventurer. “It is not thus that he should end; his death must be a punishment, a terrible punishment. Let me manage that.”

“Why any further delay?” answered Vasco Affonso.

“I promise you that there shall be no delay; this very day he shall be condemned; tomorrow he shall receive the punishment for his crimes.”

“And why not today?”

“Let us leave him time to repent; he must, before he dies, be made to feel remorse for what he has done.”

The adventurers finally decided to follow this advice, and waited for Loredano to make his appearance, in order to seize and summarily condemn him.

A considerable time passed, and nothing was seen of the Italian; it was almost noon. The adventurers were made desperate by thirst; their supply of water and wine, largely diminished since the beginning of the siege, was in the pantry, whose door Loredano had fastened on the inside.

Fortunately they discovered in the Italian's room a few flasks of wine, which they drank amid gibes and laughter, toasting the friar, whom in a short time they were going to condemn to death. In the midst of the hilarity words were let fall which revealed that they were beginning to repent; they spoke of going and begging the nobleman to pardon them, of joining him again, and aiding him in overcoming the enemy. If it had not been for shame for their guilty conduct, they would have run and thrown themselves at Dom Antônio's feet; they resolved to do so as soon as the chief cause of the revolt had received punishment for his crime. This would be their first title to pardon, and a proof of the sincerity of their repentance.

II. THE SACRIFICE.

PERY had understood the girl's action, but made no attempt to follow her. He fixed his bright eye upon her and smiled.

In her turn she also understood the expression of that smile, and the firm and unalterable resolution written on the calm forehead of the prisoner. She insisted for some time, but in vain. Pery had thrown away the bow and arrows, and was leaning against the trunk of the tree, calm and unmoved. Suddenly he started.

Cecília had appeared on the esplanade, and made a sign to him; her delicate white hand waving in the air seemed to tell him to hope. He even thought that he saw, notwithstanding the distance, the pretty face of his mistress glow with a ray of happiness.

While with his eyes on that lovely vision he was striving to divine the cause of such sudden joy, the Indian girl uttered a second cry, wild and terrible. Following the direction of the prisoner's look, she had seen Cecília on the esplanade, had perceived the movement of her hand, and understood vaguely why he had rejected liberty and her love. She sprang for the bow, but in spite of her quickness, when she reached out her hand to pick it up, Pery already had his foot upon it.

With blazing eyes and half-open lips, trembling with jealousy and revenge, she raised against him the stone knife with which she had cut the knots that bound him, but the weapon fell from her hand.

Pery took her in his arms, seated her on the grass, and sat down himself near the tree, at ease concerning Cecília, who had disappeared from the esplanade and was out of danger.

It was the hour when the shadows of the mountains climb the acclivities, and the alligator stretched on the sand basks in the sun. The air was filled with the hoarse sounds of the trumpet and the cymbal; at the same time a savage song, the war-song of the Aymorés, mingled with the sinister harmony of those harsh and resonant instruments. The girl was seized with alarm, and rising quickly beckoned to the prisoner, pointing to the forest, and entreating him to fly Pery smiled as before, and taking her hand, seated her near him, and took from his neck the golden cross that Cecília had given him. Then began between them a conversation by means of signs, of which it would be difficult to give an idea.

Pery told the maiden that he gave her that cross as a memento, but that she must take it from his neck only after his death. She understood, or thought she understood, what he was striving to express symbolically, and kissed his hands in token of gratitude. The prisoner made her tie again the knots which in her generous impulse to give him his liberty she had untied.

At that moment four Aymoré warriors advanced to the tree to lead him to the camp, where everything was now ready for the sacrifice. Pery rose and marched with a firm step and head erect before his conductors, who did not notice the quick glance that he gave to the corners of his cotton tunic, which were twisted in two small knots.

The camp, laid out in the form of an ellipse among the trees, was encircled by a hundred and odd warriors armed as for war, and covered with feather ornaments. In the rear the old women, painted with black and yellow stripes, presenting a frightful appearance, were making a fire, washing the slab that was to serve as a table, and sharpening their knives of bone and stone. The girls, grouped on one side, had under their care the vessels of wine and fermented drinks, which they offered to the warriors, as they passed by them chanting the war-song of the Aymorés.

The maiden who had been charged with serving the prisoner, and had followed him to the place of sacrifice, remained at some distance and viewed sadly these preparations; for the first time her natural instinct seemed to reveal to her the atrocity of this traditional custom of her fathers, which she had so often witnessed with pleasure. Now that she was to appear as heroine in the terrible drama, and as the bride of the prisoner was to accompany him to the last, insulting his pain and misfortune, her heart was opened; for she really loved Pery, so far as it was possible for a nature like hers to love.

On reaching the camp the savages in charge of the prisoner passed the ends of the cord that bound him around the trunks of the trees, and drawing it tightly compelled him to remain motionless between them. The warriors filed around chanting the song of vengeance; the trumpets thundered again; the shouts mingled with the sound of the cymbals, and the whole formed a horrid concert. In proportion as they became excited, the movement quickened, till the triumphal march of the warriors became an infernal dance, a swift run, a grotesque waltz, in which all those horrid figures moved like satanic spirits enveloped in the eternal flames.

At every turn one of them stepped from the circle, and advancing to the prisoner challenged him to combat, and called upon him to give proofs of his courage, his strength, and his valor. Pery, calm and lofty, received with a proud disdain the threats and insults, and felt a certain pride in the thought that in the midst of all those brave and well-armed warriors, he, the prisoner, - the enemy about to be sacrificed, - was the real, the only conqueror. Perhaps this may seem incomprehensible, but the fact is that Pery thought so, and that only the secret which he carefully guarded in his own bosom could explain the ground of this thought, and of the calmness with which he waited his fate.

The dance continued, amid songs, shouts, and constant potations, when all at once everything became quiet, and the most profound silence reigned in the camp of the Aymorés. All eyes were turned to a curtain of leaves that concealed a kind of cabin standing on the edge of the camp in front of the prisoner. The warriors stepped aside, the leaves opened, and amid those fringes of verdure appeared the gigantic figure of the aged cazique. Two tapir skins, tied over his shoulders, covered his body like a tunic; a tall plume of scarlet feathers waved upon his head, and added to his lofty stature. His face was painted a greenish and oily color, and on his neck he wore a collar made of the bright feathers of the toucan; from this weird setting his eyes gleamed like two volcanic fires in the bosom of the night. He carried in his left hand his war-club covered with glittering feathers, and to his right arm was fastened a sort of trumpet, made of the enormous shin-bone of some enemy killed in battle. On entering the camp he raised this instrument to his mouth and drew forth a harsh sound; the Aymorés hailed with cries of joy and enthusiasm the appearance of the conqueror. To the cazique belonged the honor of being the executioner; his arm was to consummate the great work of revenge, - that sentiment which embodied for those superstitious peoples the idea of true glory.

Scarcely had the acclamations ceased with which the arrival of the conqueror was received, when one of the warriors accompanying him advanced and fastened in the ground at the extremity of the camp a stake destined to receive the head of the enemy, as soon as it should be severed from his body.

At the same time the young woman who officiated as the prisoner’s bride took the wooden sword that hung from her father’s shoulder, and untying Pery’s arms offered him the weapon, with a look full of bitter reproach. That look told him that if he had accepted the love she had offered, and with her love life and liberty, she would not be obliged by the traditional custom of her tribe thus to mock his death. In fact, this offer that the savages made the prisoner of a weapon with which to defend himself was a cruel irony; held fast as he was by the cord, what would it avail him to brandish the sword in the air, if he could not reach his enemies?

Pery accepted the weapon, and trampling it under foot, folded his arms and awaited the cazique, who was advancing slowly, with a terrible and threatening aspect. Arriving before the prisoner, his face lighted up with a ferocious smile, a reflection of that intoxication of blood which dilates the nostrils of the jaguar when ready to leap upon his prey.

“I am your executioner!” said he, in Guarany.

Pery did not show surprise at hearing his beautiful language mutilated by the harsh and guttural sounds that issued from the lips of the savage.

“Pery does not fear you!”

“Are you a Goytacaz?”

“I am your enemy!”

“Defend yourself!”

Pery smiled. “You do not deserve it.”

The old man’s eyes flashed with rage; his hand grasped the handle of his club, but he at once repressed this ebullition of anger. The prisoner’s bride brought the conqueror a large vessel of glazed earthenware full of pineapple wine still foaming. The savage drank at one draught the aromatic beverage, and drawing himself up to his full height, cast a proud look upon the prisoner. “Goytacaz warrior, you are strong and valiant; your nation is formidable in war. The Aymoré nation is mighty among the mightiest, valiant among the most valiant. You are going to die.”

The chorus of savages made response to this chant, which formed a prelude to the dreadful sacrifice. The old man continued. “Goytacaz warrior, you are a prisoner: your head belongs to the Aymoré warrior; your body to the sons of his tribe; your entrails will furnish the banquet of revenge. You are going to die.”

The cries of the savages responded again, and the chant was continued long, celebrating the glorious deeds of the Aymoré nation, and the achievements of its chief.

While the old man was speaking, Pery listened with the same calmness and imperturbability; not a muscle of his face betrayed the least emotion; his clear and serene look now rested on the countenance of the cazique, now ranged over the camp, taking note of the prepparations for the sacrifice. Any one observing him would scarcely have noticed that, standing as he was with his arms folded, one of his hands was secretly undoing one of the knots of his tunic.

When the old man finished speaking he faced the prisoner, and stepping back a little, raised slowly the heavy club, which he held in his left hand. The Aymorés waited eagerly; the old women with their stone knives quivered with impatience; the girls smiled, while the prisoner’s bride turned away her face, not to see the dreadful spectacle.

At that moment Pery, raising both his hands to his eyes, covered his face, and bowing his head, remained some time in that position without making any movement to indicate the slightest perturbation.

The old man smiled. “You are afraid!”

At these words Pery raised his head with a lordly air. An expression of joy and serenity irradiated his countenance, not unlike the ecstasy of the martyrs of religion, when in the last hour, beyond the tomb they catch glimpses of the heavenly happiness. His noble soul, ready to leave the earth, seemed to be already exhaling from its integument, and resting on his lips, in his eyes, on his forehead, was awaiting the moment to soar into space, and seek repose in the bosom of its Creator. He fixed his eyes on the heavens, as if the approaching death was an enchanting vision descending upon him from the clouds with a smile. In that last dream of existence, he saw the sweet image of Cecília, happy, cheerful, and contented; he saw his mistress safe.

“Strike!” said Pery to the cazique.

The instruments sounded again; the shouts and chants were mingled with those harsh sounds, and reverberated through the forest like thunder rolling among the clouds. The club covered with feathers whirled in the air, flashing in the rays of the sun, as they were reflected from the brilliant colors.

At that moment an explosion was heard, a cry of agony, and the fall of a body; all this confusedly, so that it was not possible at the instant to tell what had happened.

III. THE SORTIE.

THE explosion that was heard had been caused by a shot from among the trees. The aged Aymoré staggered; his arm fell nerveless; his body sank to the earth like the palm in the forest when struck by lightning. Death had been almost instantaneous; scarcely a gasp escaped from his breast; he had fallen at once a corpse.

While the savages were still paralyzed by the occurrence, Álvaro, sword in hand and carbine still smoking, rushed into the camp. With two rapid strokes he cut the knots that bound Pery, and with the vibrations of his sword held in check the warriors, who coming to themselves, fell upon him bellowing with fury.

Almost at the same moment a discharge of arquebuses was heard, and ten fearless men, with Ayres Gomes at their head, leaped in their turn into the camp, and began to deal deadly blows with their swords. They did not resemble men, but rather ten demons, ten engines of war vomiting forth death on every side. While their right hands wielded the sword with terrific effect, their left hands used the dagger with wonderful and unerring skill.

The esquire and his men had formed a semicircle around Álvaro and Pery, and presented a barrier of iron and fire to the waves of savages, which broke in vain against it. During the brief moment that intervened between the death of the cazique and the attack of the adventurers, Pery, with folded arms, looked unmoved upon what was going on

around him. He understood then the sign which his mistress had made to him from the esplanade, and the ray of hope and joy that he had supposed he saw on her countenance.

In the first moment of grief Cecília had started in pursuit of him, to call him back, and entreat him not to expose his life uselessly. Finding that he was already out of sight, she felt a cruel despair, returned to her father, and with her cheeks bedewed with tears, her bosom heaving, and her voice full of anguish, begged him to save her friend.

Dom Antônio, before his daughter made this request, had already thought of calling his faithful comrades, and at their head attacking the enemy, and delivering the Indian from the certain death that awaited him. But the nobleman was a man honorable and generous in character beyond exception; he knew that the undertaking was one of extreme peril, and did not wish to oblige his comrades to share a sacrifice that he would willingly make alone out of friendship for Pery. The adventurers that had devoted themselves with such constancy to the defense of his family had not the same reasons to risk their lives for the sake of a man who did not belong to their religion, and with whom they had nothing in common.

Dom Antônio, perplexed, irresolute between friendship and his generous scruples, knew not what to say to his daughter; he endeavored to console her, and grieved that he could not gratify her wish at once.

Álvaro, regarding this painful scene from a little distance, surrounded by the faithful and devoted adventurers who were subject to his orders, formed a sudden resolution. His heart was torn to see Cecília suffering, and although he loved Isabel, his noble soul still felt for the woman to whom he had devoted his first dreams of pure and respectful affection, a sort of worship.

It was a singular circumstance in the life of this girl that every passion, every sentiment, that centered in her felt the influence of her innocence and gradually became purified and assumed an ideal character. Even the violent and sensual love of Loredano, when it found itself face to face with her asleep in her purity, had hesitated for a moment to contaminate her.

Álvaro exchanged a few words with the adventurers, and then stepping forward said, “Console yourself, Dona Cecília, and wait!”

The girl turned full upon him her blue eyes, with a look of gratitude; that word was at least a hope.

“What do you intend to do?” asked Dom Antônio of the cavalier.

“Rescue Pery from the hands of the enemy.”

“You!” cried Cecília.

“Yes, Dona Cecília,” said the young man; “those devoted men were moved at seeing your grief, and wished to spare you a justifiable pain.” Álvaro attributed the generous initiative to his comrades, while they had done nothing but accept his proposal with enthusiasm.

Dom Antônio experienced a deep satisfaction at hearing the young man’s words. His scruples vanished as soon as his men of their own accord offered to undertake that difficult enterprise.

“Give me a part of our men, four or five are enough,” continued Álvaro, addressing the nobleman, “and you remain with the rest to ward off any unexpected attack.”

“No,” answered Dom Antônio; “take them all, since they volunteer for this most noble undertaking, which I did not venture to demand of their courage. To defend my daughter I am sufficient, though old.”

“Pardon me, Dom Antônio,” replied Álvaro, “but it is an imprudence that I oppose. Consider that a few steps from you there are abandoned men who respect nothing, and who are watching for an opportunity to injure you.”

“You know whether I prize and esteem this treasure whose keeping has been intrusted to me by God. Do you think there is anything in this world that could make me expose it to a new danger? Believe me, Dom Antônio de Mariz, alone, will defend his family, while you are rescuing a good and noble friend.”

“You trust too much in your own strength!”

“I trust in God and in the power that he has placed in my hands, - a terrible power, which when the moment arrives will lay all our enemies low.”

The voice of the aged nobleman while pronouncing these words had clothed itself with an imposing solemnity, and his face lighted up with an expression of heroism and majesty which heightened its severe beauty.

Álvaro looked with a respectful admiration upon him, while Cecília, pale and palpitating with emotion, awaited their decision with anxiety. The young man did not insist, but submitted to Dom Antônio’s will. “I obey you; we will all go, and return the sooner.”

The nobleman grasped his hand. “Save him!”

“O yes!” exclaimed Cecília, “save him, Senhor Álvaro.”

“I swear, Dona Cecília, that only the will of heaven shall prevent me from executing your order.“

She found no word to express thanks for that generous promise; her whole soul went forth in a heavenly smile.

Álvaro bowed before her, and joining the adventurers gave orders to prepare for the start. When he entered the then deserted hall to get his arms, Isabel, who already knew of the intended expedition, ran to him, pale and alarmed.

“Are you going to fight?” said she in a tremulous voice

“Why should that surprise you? Do we not fight every day with the enemy?”

“At a distance! Defended by the position! But now it is different!”

“Have no fear, Isabel! In an hour from now I shall be back.”

He slung his carbine over his shoulder and started to go out.

Isabel took his hands with a passionate impulse; her eyes flashed with a strange fire; her cheeks were aglow with a living blush.

Álvaro sought to withdraw his hands from that ardent and passionate pressure. “Isabel,” said he in a tone of gentle reproof, “do you wish me to prove false to my word, to retreat before a danger?”

“No! I could never ask such a thing of you! It would be necessary that I should not know you, - that I should not - love you!”

“Then let me go.”

“I have a favor to beg of you.”

“Of me? - at this moment?”

“Yes! at this moment! Notwithstanding what you have said, notwithstanding your heroism, I know that you are going to a certain death.”. Her voice became broken.

“Who knows - whether we shall see each other again in this world!”

“Isabel!” said the young man, striving to escape, in order to avoid the emotion that was overpowering him.

“You promised to do me the favor that I asked.”

“What is it?”

“Before leaving, before bidding me farewell forever -”

The maiden fixed upon him a fascinating look.

“Speak! Speak!”

“Before we separate, I entreat you, leave me some memento of yourself! One to linger in my soul!” And she fell on her knees at his feet, concealing her face, which modesty in conflict with passion covered with a bright carmine.

Álvaro lifted her up, covered with confusion and shame at her act, and putting his lips to her ear pronounced, or rather murmured, a sentence.

Her countenance expanded; a halo of joy encircled her forehead; her bosom dilated, and her heart bounded. “I love you!” That was the sentence Álvaro had let fall into her soul, filling it completely like a celestial emanation, like a divine song resounding in her ears, and causing every nerve to vibrate.

When she recovered from this ecstasy the young man had left the room and joined his comrades, who were now ready for the march. It was on this occasion that Cecília, going imprudently to the palisade, made a sign to Pery, telling him to hope.

The little column set out under command of Álvaro and Ayres Gomes, who for three days had not left his post in the armory.

When the brave combatants disappeared in the forest, Dom Antônio retired with his family to the hall, and seating himself in his arm chair waited calmly. He did not exhibit the slightest apprehension of being attacked by the revolted adventurers, who were but a few steps distant, and would not fail to take advantage of such an opportunity. He had entire confidence on that score; having secured the doors, and examined the priming of his pistols, he enjoined silence, that not a noise might escape him.

Watchful and observant, the nobleman at the same time reflected on the recent occurrence, which had so profoundly impressed him. He knew Pery, and could not understand how the Indian, always so intelligent and acute, had suffered himself to be carried away by a mad hope to the point of attacking the savages single-handed. His extreme devotion for his mistress, their desperate situation, might have explained this insane act, if the nobleman had not known to what an extent Pery possessed calmness, fortitude, and coolness, which render man superior to every danger.

The result of his reflections was that there was something in Pery’s conduct not entirely clear, which would have to be explained later.

While Dom Antônio was occupied with these thoughts, Álvaro had made a circuit, and favored by the festivities of the savages approached them unperceived. When he caught sight of Pery, some yards distant, the aged cazique was raising his club over his head.

The young man brought his carbine to his face, and the ball whistling through the air penetrated the savage's skull.

IV. THE REVELATION.

AS soon as Álvaro found himself, by the arrival of his comrades, freed from the attacks of the enemy, he turned to Pery, who had witnessed the whole scene without making a motion to escape.

"Come!" said the young man authoritatively.

"No!" answered the Indian coldly.

"Your mistress calls you!"

Pery bowed his head in deep sadness. "Tell mistress that Pery must die, that he dies for her. And do you go at once, or it will be too late."

Álvaro examined the Indian's intelligent countenance, to see if he could discover any sign of mental disorder, for he could not understand the cause of this senseless obstinacy.

Pery's face, wearing a calm and serene expression, revealed only a firm and unalterable resolution, all the deeper from being exhibited under an appearance of quiet and tranquillity.

"So you will not obey your mistress?"

Pery could scarcely force the words from his lips, "No one."

While he was pronouncing this word, a feeble cry was raised at his side; he turned and saw the girl who had been assigned as his bride fall, pierced by an arrow. The shaft had been aimed at Pery by one of the savages, and the girl, springing to cover the body of him whom she had loved for an hour, had received it in her breast. Her black eyes, pale with the shades of death, turned upon the prisoner a last look, and closing, opened again, lifeless and lusterless. He experienced an emotion of pity and sympathy on seeing this victim of her own devotion, who, like him, was ready to sacrifice herself for the one she loved.

Álvaro did not notice this scene, but turning to his men fighting valiantly with the Aymorés, made a sign to Ayres Gomes. "Listen, Pery; you know whether I am in the habit of keeping my word. I have sworn to Cecília to bring you back, and either you go with me or we will all die on this spot."

"Do what you will! Pery will not leave this place."

“Do you see these men? They are the only remaining defense of your mistress. If they all perish, you will know that it is impossible for her to be saved.”

Pery was agitated. He remained a moment in thought; then, without giving time to follow him, sprang into the woods.

Dom Antônio and his family, having heard the report of the arquebuses, awaited with anxiety the result of the expedition. Ten minutes had elapsed in the greatest impatience, when they heard a knock on the door, followed by Pery’s voice; Cecília ran, and the Indian knelt at her feet, asking her pardon.

The nobleman, saved from the pain of losing a friend, had put on again his customary sternness, as always when a grave offense had been committed. “You have been guilty of a great imprudence,” said he to the Indian; “you have caused your friends much suffering; you have imperiled the lives of those who love you. You need no other punishment than this.”

“Pery was going to save you!”

“By delivering yourself into the hands of the enemy?”

“Yes.”

“And getting killed by them?”

“Killed and -”

“But what would be the result of such madness?”

The Indian was silent.

“You must explain this affair, if you do not wish us to think that our former intelligent and devoted friend has become a madman and a rebel.”

The word was severe, and the tone in which it was spoken emphasized the reproof it conveyed.

Pery felt a tear moisten his eyelids. “Will you compel Pery to tell all?”

“You must do so, if you wish to recover your place in my esteem, which I should regret to withdraw from you.”

“Pery will tell everything.”

Álvaro entered at this moment, having left his comrades on the esplanade, now free from danger, and unharmed save for some few wounds, which fortunately were not very severe. Cecília grasped the young man's hands with gratitude; Isabel sent forth her whole soul to him in a look.

The persons present grouped themselves around Dom Antônio's chair, in front of which Pery, standing with bowed head, confused and ashamed as though a criminal, was ready to justify himself. One would have thought that he was confessing some mean and unworthy act. He began:

"When Ararê laid his body on the ground to lift it up no more, he called Pery, and said: 'Son of Ararê, your father is going to die. Remember that your flesh is my flesh; that your blood is my blood. Your body must not furnish a banquet to the enemy.'

"Ararê said, and took off his chaplet of berries, and gave them to his son. They were full of poison; they had death in them. If Pery was a prisoner, it would be enough for him to break one of these berries, and he might laugh at the conqueror, who would not dare to touch his body.

Pery saw that his mistress was suffering and looked at his chaplet; he had an idea; Ararê's legacy might save all. If you had let me do what I wished, when night came it would not have found a single enemy alive; neither whites nor Indians would have troubled you any more."

The whole family listened to this narrative with the greatest surprise; they understood from it that Pery possessed a terrible weapon - poison; but they could not know the means which he had employed or intended to employ in the use of this agent of destruction.

"Finish!" said Dom Antônio. "How then did you intend to destroy the enemy?"

"Pery poisoned the water which the white men drink, and his body, which was to furnish the Aymorés a banquet!"

A cry of horror greeted these words, spoken by the Indian in a simple and natural tone. The plan that Pery had formed to save his friends stood revealed in all its sublime self-sacrifice, and with the train of terrible and monstrous scenes that were to accompany its consummation. Relying on this poison, which the Indians knew by the name of *curari*, and whose preparation was a secret of a few tribes, Pery with his intelligence and devotion had discovered a way of overcoming the enemy single-handed, in spite of their number and strength. He knew the violence and quick effect of that weapon which his father had entrusted to him in the hour of death; he knew that a small portion of that subtle powder was enough to destroy in a few hours the strongest and most robust frame. He resolved therefore to use this power, which in his heroic hand was to become an instrument of salvation, and the agent of a terrible sacrifice made to friendship. Two berries sufficed; one served to poison the water and drinks of the revolted adventurers; the other accompanied him till the moment of expected death, when it passed from his hands to his lips.

When the cazique seeing him cover his face asked him if he was afraid, Pery had taken the poison into his body, which a few hours later was to be a germ of death for all those brave and powerful warriors.

But what gave this plan a stamp of grandeur and admirableness, was not merely the heroism of the sacrifice, but the horrible beauty of the conception, the superiority of thought that had connected so many events and subjected them to its will, causing them to follow each other naturally, and proceed to a necessary and sure result. For, it must be observed, saving some extraordinary occurrence such as human foresight cannot prevent, Pery, when he left the house, had the certainty that matters would result just as in fact they did result. In attacking the Aymorés his intention was to excite their revenge. It was necessary for him to prove himself strong, valiant, fearless, for the savages to consider him worthy of their hatred. With his dexterity, and the precaution he had taken to make his body impenetrable, he expected to avoid death until he had carried out his intention; but even if he should fall wounded he would have time to pass the poison to his lips.

His foresight, however, did not deceive him; having accomplished what he desired, having excited the rage of the Aymorés, he broke his weapon, and entreated the enemy to spare his life. This was for him the most difficult part of the whole sacrifice. But it was necessary; Cecília's life demanded it; death which had thus far respected him might surprise him, and he wished to be taken prisoner, as he was and intended to be. The custom of the savages not to kill their enemies in war, but to take them captive to furnish the banquet of revenge, was a guaranty of the success of his plan.

According to the custom of the Indians, the whole tribe must take part in the feast; the young women scarcely touched the flesh of the prisoner; but the warriors enjoyed it as a dainty morsel, seasoned by the pleasure of revenge; and the old women devoured it with the savage gluttony of harpies gorging themselves with the blood of their victims. Pery expected then with every certainty that within a few hours the poisoned body of the victim would carry death to the executioners, and that he alone would destroy a whole tribe, large, brave, powerful, merely with the aid of that silent weapon.

It can now be imagined what was his despair at seeing this plan overthrown. After having disobeyed his mistress, after having accomplished everything, when only the consummation was wanting, when the blow that would save all was ready to fall, to have the face of things suddenly changed, and his work, the child of so much deliberation, destroyed, was too much!

Even then he wished to resist, wished to remain, hoping that the Aymorés would continue the sacrifice; but he knew that Álvaro's resolution was as immovable as his own; that he would cause the death of all the faithful defenders of Dom Antônio without even then having the certainty of saving him.

For a moment following Pery's confession all the actors in that scene stood pale, amazed and terror-stricken, their eyes riveted on the Indian, doubting whether they had heard aright; their horrified minds could not frame an idea; their trembling lips could not utter a word.

Dom Antônio was the first to recover his composure. Notwithstanding his admiration for Pery's heroic act, and the emotions produced by a conception at once so sublime and horrible, one circumstance had particularly impressed itself on his mind. The adventurers were about to become the victims of poison, and however low in baseness and degradation those men had sunk through their treason, the nobleman's sense of honor could not tolerate such a proceeding. He would punish them all with death or with contempt, which is a moral death; but punishment in his opinion would raise their death to the height of an example, while revenge would lower it to the level of assassination.

"Go, Ayres Gomes," cried he to his esquire; "run and warn those unfortunate men, if there is still time!"

V. THE MAGAZINE.

CECÍLIA, upon hearing her father's voice, started as if awakening from a dream. She crossed the room with an unsteady step, and reaching Pery, fixed full upon him her blue eyes with an indefinable expression. Her look expressed at the same time her unbounded admiration for his heroic conduct, the deep grief she felt for his loss, and a gentle reproof for his not having listened to her entreaties.

The Indian did not venture even to raise his eyes to his mistress; not having realized his desire, he now considered everything he had done as an act of folly. He felt guilty, and his conduct, heroic and sublime in the eyes of the others, only left behind for him the pain of having offended Cecília, and of having uselessly incurred her displeasure. "Pery," said she in despair; "why did you not do what your mistress asked?"

He did not know what to reply: he feared that he had lost her affection, and that thought imbittered the last moments that remained to him of life.

"Did not Cecília tell you," continued she, sobbing, "that she would not accept safety at the cost of your life?"

"Pery has already asked you to pardon him!" murmured the Indian.

"O, if you knew what suffering you have today caused your mistress! But she pardons you."

"Yes!" exclaimed Pery, his countenance lighting up.

“Yes. Cecília pardons you for all that she has suffered and all that she is yet to suffer. But it will be but for a little while, -” she pronounced those words with a sad smile of sublime resignation; she knew that there was no further hope of deliverance, and that thought almost reconciled her.

But she could not finish; the words remained quivering on her lips; her eyes rested on Pery with an expression of terror and dismay. The Indian’s countenance had become distorted; his noble features disfigured by violent contractions, his sunken cheeks and purple lips, gave him a frightful appearance.

“The poison!” cried the spectators of this dreadful scene.

Cecília made a violent effort, and springing to his side, sought to revive him.

“Pery! Pery!” she faltered, warming in her own the icy hands of her friend.

“Pery is going to leave you forever, mistress.”

“No! no!” exclaimed the maiden, beside herself. “I do not want you to leave us! O, you are bad! very bad! - if you regarded your mistress, you would not abandon her thus!”

The tears bedewed her cheeks, and in her despair she knew not what she said. She uttered disconnected sentences, without meaning, but they revealed the violence of her anguish.

“Do you wish Pery to live, mistress?” said the Indian with emotion.

“Yes!” answered she in a supplicating tone. “I wish you to live!”

“Pery will live!”

The Indian made a violent effort, and recovering somewhat the elasticity of his stiffened limbs, went to the door and disappeared. All present followed him with their eyes, and saw him descend to the plain and enter the forest upon a run.

His last word had for a moment given hope to Dom Antônio; but almost immediately doubt took possession of his mind; he thought that the Indian was deceiving himself. Cecília, however, had more than a hope; she had almost a certainty that Pery was not mistaken; the promise of her friend gave her the greatest confidence. Pery had never told her anything that was not fulfilled; what seemed impossible to others became very easy to his firm and immovable will, - to the superhuman power with which strength and intelligence clothed him.

When Dom Antônio and his family returned filled with sadness, Álvaro, standing at the door of the armory, made a sign of alarm to the nobleman, and pointed to the chapel.

The rear wall, on the point of falling, was rocking on its foundation like a tree shaken by the wind.

Dom Antônio smiled, and, ordering his family to go into the armory, took his pistol from his belt, cocked it, and waited at the door by Álvaro's side.

At the same instant a great crash was heard, and amid a thick cloud of dust that rose from the debris six men were precipitated into the hall.

Loredano was the first; he had scarcely touched the floor, when he rose with remarkable quickness, and, followed by his comrades, marched straight to the armory, where the family were gathered.

But they recoiled, pale and trembling, terror-stricken before the mute and terrible scene that met their astounded eyes.

In the center of the room stood one of the large vessels of glazed earthenware made by the Indians, containing at least thirty pounds of powder. From an opening in this vessel a train led to the bottom of the magazine, where all the nobleman's munitions of war were stored. Two pistols, Dom Antônio's and Álvaro's, were awaiting the first movements of the adventurers to throw the first spark into the volcano. Dona Lauriana, Cecília, and Isabel, were on their knees praying, expecting every moment to see all the actors in this scene swallowed up in a common ruin.

This was the terrible weapon of which Dom Antônio had spoken, when he told Álvaro that God had intrusted to him the power of striking all his enemies dead. The young man now understood the reason why the nobleman had obliged him to go with all the men to rescue Pery, thinking himself strong enough alone to defend his family.

The adventurers remembered Dom Antônio's solemn oath; the nobleman held them all in the hollow of his hand, and it was enough for him to close that to crush them like a lump of clay. Casting a terrified look around them, the six criminals wanted to fly, but had not courage to take a step, and stood as if rooted to the spot.

At that moment voices were heard on the outside, and Ayres Gomes, followed by the rest of the adventurers. appeared at the door.

Loredano knew that this time he was irremediably lost, and resolved to sell his life dearly. But a new misfortune overtook him. Two of his comrades fell at his feet writhing in horrible convulsions, and uttering cries that excited pity and compassion.

At first no one understood the cause of this sudden and violent death; then the thought of Pery's poison occurred to the memory of some of them.

The adventurers who came with Ayres Gomes seized Loredano, and knelt in confusion and shame at Dom Antônio's feet, begging him to pardon their misconduct.

The nobleman had witnessed all these occurrences, which followed each other in such rapid succession, without leaving his first position. He seemed to be hovering over the human passions contending at his feet, like a genius ready to launch the bolt of heaven.

“Your offense is such as cannot be pardoned,” said he. “But we are now in the last hour, when God bids us forget all offenses. Rise, and let all prepare to die like Christians.”

The adventurers rose, and dragging Loredano out of the room, withdrew to the porch with consciences relieved of a great weight.

The family could then, after so many agitations, enjoy a little quiet and repose: notwithstanding their desperate situation, the accession of the revolted adventurers had brought a feeble ray of hope.

But Dom Antônio was not misled. Since morning he had known that even if the Aymorés did not overcome him by force of arms, they would conquer him by famine. All his provisions were consumed, and only a vigorous sortie could save the family from the impending fate, a fate more cruel than a violent death.

The nobleman determined to exhaust his last resources before confessing himself vanquished; he wished to die with the tranquilizing consciousness of having performed his duty, and of having done whatever was humanly possible. He called Álvaro, and conferred with him for some time in a low voice. They were concerting means to carry out the idea upon which the sole hope of safety depended.

In the mean time the adventurers assembled in council, held a trial upon Brother Angelo di Luca, and unanimously condemned him.

The sentence having been pronounced, various opinions were brought forward respecting the punishment that ought to be inflicted upon the culprit, each seeking the cruelest mode of death; but the general sentiment adopted the stake as the punishment set apart by the Inquisition for heretics.

They set up in the courtyard a high post, and piled up around it a great quantity of wood and other combustibles; then upon this pyre they bound the friar, who endured all their insults and injuries without uttering a word.

A sort of lethargy had taken possession of the Italian from the moment when the adventurers dragged him from the hall; he was conscious of his crime and certain of his condemnation. Yet while they were tying him to the stake an incident suddenly awakened the feeling of this man, stupefied by the thought of death and by the conviction that he could not escape from it. One of the adventurers, one of the five accomplices in the last conspiracy, stepped up to him, and taking off the belt that clasped his doublet, exhibited it to his comrades. Loredano, finding himself separated from his treasure, experienced a much more acute pain than that which awaited him at the stake; for him no punishment, no martyrdom could equal this. What had consoled him in his last hour was the thought that this

secret which he possessed, but could not turn to account, would die with him and be lost to all; that none would enjoy the treasure that had eluded him.

Therefore, when the adventurer took off the girdle in which he kept the precious parchment, he fairly roared with anger and impotent rage; his eyes became bloodshot, and his limbs struggled against the cords that bound him to the post. It was a dreadful sight; his countenance wore a brutal and savage expression; his lips foamed and hissed like a serpent; and he gnashed his teeth upon his executioners like a beast.

The adventurers laughed at his despair to find himself robbed of his precious treasure, and amused themselves by increasing his torture with the promise that as soon as they were rid of the Aymorés they would make an expedition to the silver mines.

The Italian's rage redoubled when Martim Vaz tied the girdle around his own body, and said with a smile: "You know the proverb: 'The dainty is not for him who prepares it.'"

VI. THE TRUCE.

IT was eight o'clock at night. The adventurers, seated around a small fire in the courtyard, were awaiting the cooking of a few beans, which were to form their meagre supper. Want had taken the place of the former abundance: deprived of game, their ordinary food, they were reduced to a few simple vegetables. Their wines and the fermented drinks of which they partook largely had been poisoned by Pery, and they were therefore obliged to throw them away, fortunate in not having fallen victims to them. Loredano's closing the door of the pantry had saved them; only two of the adventurers who were with him had touched the liquors, and they a few hours later fell dead, as we have seen, when they went to attack Dom Antônio.

It was not the mournful scenes they witnessed and their critical situation that imparted to these men, always so cheerful and jovial, an unnatural sadness. To die with arms in their hands fighting against the enemy was for them a natural thing, a thought to which their lives of adventure and peril had accustomed them. But not to have a good supper and a jug of wine before them caused real dejection. It was the stomach cramped by want of food that took away all disposition to laugh and make merry.

The red flame now and then waved in the breeze, and at a little distance illuminated with its dim light the countenance of Loredano, tied to the stake upon his funeral pile.

The adventurers had decided to defer the penalty, and give the friar time to repent of his crimes and prepare to die like a Christian; they therefore left him the night for reflection. Perhaps also some refinement of malice and revenge

entered into this determination. Considering the Italian as the real cause of their present situation, his comrades hated him, and wished to prolong his suffering in requital of the injury he had done them. So from time to time one of them rose, and going to the friar upbraided him for his wickedness, and covered him with reproaches and insults. Loredano writhed with fury, but uttered not a word, because his executioners had threatened to cut out his tongue.

Ayres Gomes appeared, to summon the adventurers before Dom Antônio. They all hastened to obey. and in a few moments entered the hall, where the whole family was assembled.

The subject under consideration was a sortie, for the purpose of obtaining provisions to sustain the company till Dom Diogo had time to arrive with the succor he had gone to procure. Dom Antônio decided to retain ten men for his own defense; the rest were to go with Álvaro. If they were fortunate, there would still be hope; if unsuccessful, they could at least all die like Christians and Portuguese.

The expedition was immediately made ready, and under cover of the night set out, and was lost in the forest. It had orders to get away without being seen by the Aymorés, and to endeavor to obtain in the neighborhood a sufficient store of food.

During the first hour that followed the departure those who remained behind listened with attentive ear, fearing to hear at any moment the report of fire-arms announcing a fight between the adventurers and the Indians. Everything remained silent, and a hope, though vague and slender, sprang up in those hearts, torn by so many sufferings and so many griefs.

The night passed quietly; nothing indicated that the house was surrounded by an enemy so terrible as the Aymorés. Dom Antônio wondered that the savages, after the attack in the morning, remained quietly in their camp, and had not once assaulted the dwelling. The thought passed through his mind that they had retired in consequence of the loss of some of their principal warriors; but he had too long known the vindictive disposition and the tenacity of that race to harbor such a supposition.

Cecília lay on a sofa, and overcome by fatigue, slept in spite of the sad thoughts and disquietudes that disturbed her. Isabel, her heart oppressed by a terrible presentiment, could only think of Álvaro, following him in his perilous expedition, and mingling with her prayers the burning words of her love.

Thus passed this night, the first for three days in which the family had been able to enjoy a few moments' repose. From time to time the nobleman went to the window, and saw in the distance, near the river, the fires burning in the camp of the Aymorés; but a profound calm reigned over the whole plain. Not even the dim echo was heard of one of those monotonous songs with which the savages are wont at night to accompany the swinging of their straw hammocks; merely the rustling of the wind among the leaves, the fall of the water upon the rocks, and the cry of the *oitibó*[34]. While contemplating the solitude, he would insensibly return to the hope that had a moment before smiled

upon him, but which his judgment had rejected as a mere illusion. Everything indeed seemed to indicate that the savages had abandoned their camp, leaving in it only the fires that had lighted the preparations for their departure. To one who, like Dom Antônio, was familiar with the habits of those barbarous tribes, who knew how active, restless, and noisy, was the wandering life they led, the silence in which the river margin lay buried was a sure sign that the Aymorés were no longer there. Nevertheless, the nobleman, too prudent to trust in appearances, had directed his men to redouble their vigilance, to guard against any surprise. Perhaps that quiet, that repose, was only one of those sinister calms that precede great tempests, during which the elements seem to be gathering up their forces for the dreadful struggle, which has for its battle-field space and infinity.

The hours ran silently by; the *viuvinha* sang its first song; and the white light of dawn began to dissipate the shades of night. Gradually day began to appear; the morning hue mantled the horizon, and tinged the clouds with all the colors of the rainbow. The first ray of the sun, piercing those thin and transparent vapors, shot through the blue of heaven and played upon the mountain tops.

The sun itself appeared, and torrents of light inundated the whole forest, which swam in a sea of gold inlaid with brilliants sparkling in every drop of dew that hung upon the leaves.

The company in the house, awaking, admired this magnificent spectacle of the birth of a day, which after so many trials and sufferings seemed to them entirely new. A night of quiet and repose had, as it were, restored them to life. Never had those green fields, that pure and limpid stream, those flourishing trees, those cloudless skies, looked to their eyes so beautiful, so smiling, as now.

Cecília, like a flower opening in the field, felt the fresh influence of morning: her cheeks regained their color, as if a ray of the sun had kissed and left its rosy impress upon them; her eyes sparkled; and her lips, half opening to inhale the pure and balmy air, arched prettily, almost smiling. Hope, that invisible angel, that gentle friend of sufferers, had found a resting place in her heart, and kept whispering in her ear confused words, mysterious songs, which she did not understand, but which comforted her and poured a sweet balsam into her soul.

All in the house felt something, an animation, the beginning of better things, which revealed that a great transformation had taken place during the night; it was more than hope, less than security.

Isabel was the only one who did not share the general feeling. Like her cousin, she too had come forth to witness the dawn of day; but it was to interrogate nature, and ask the sun, the light, the sky, whether the gloomy images that had passed and repassed before her eyes in her long vigil were a reality or a vision. Strange! That brilliant sun, that resplendent light, that azure sky, which had given the others new courage, and should have inspired in Isabel the same feeling, seemed to her on the contrary a bitter irony. She compared the radiant scene spread out before her eyes with the picture engraved in her soul; while nature smiled, her heart was weeping. Amid this splendid festival of the rising day, her grief, solitary, companionless, found no sympathy, and repulsed by nature sought refuge again in her

bosom. She rested her head on her cousin's shoulder, and hid her face there so as not to disturb the sweet serenity pictured on Cecília's countenance.

Meantime, Dom Antônio had taken measures to ascertain whether his suspicions were well grounded, and had satisfied himself that the savages had abandoned their camp. Ayres Gomes, accompanied by Master Nunes, left the house, and approached with every precaution the place where the day before the Aymorés were celebrating the sacrifice of Pery. All was deserted; there were no longer to be seen the earthern vessels, the pieces of meat hanging from the branches, and the coarse hammocks that marked the halting place of a horde of savages. There was no further room for doubt, the Aymorés had taken their departure the evening before, after burying their dead.

The esquire returned to give this information to the nobleman, who received it with less pleasure than might have been expected. He was ignorant of the cause and purpose of this sudden departure, and distrusted it. This is not to be wondered at. Dom Antônio was a prudent and cautious man; his forty years' experience had made him suspicious; on no account would he encourage a hope in his followers that might be blasted.

VII. THE FLIGHT.

WHILE the family were enjoying the first moments of tranquillity after so many tribulations, a cry was heard at the stone steps.

Cecília sprang up with an emotion of joy; she recognized Pery's voice.

Before she could run to meet her friend, Master Nunes had lowered a plank, and Pery was already at the door.

Dom Antônio, his wife, and his daughter, stood mute with amazement and terror. Isabel fell lifeless to the floor. Pery had on his shoulders Álvaro's lifeless body, and his face wore an expression of profound grief.

He laid his precious burden on the sofa, and gazing on the pale features of him who had been his friend wiped away a tear that coursed down his cheek. No one ventured to break the solemn silence; the adventurers who had followed Pery as he ran through their midst stopped at the door with mingled feelings of pity and respect at the sad spectacle.

Cecília could not enjoy her satisfaction at seeing Pery safe and sound; her eyes in spite of past sufferings still had tears to shed for the true and noble life that death had garnered. Dom Antônio's grief was that of a father for the loss of a son, the silent and concentrated grief that shakes without wholly crushing, powerful natures.

After the first shock had passed away the nobleman interrogated Pery, and heard from his lips the brief narrative of the events whose sad outcome lay before him.

On leaving the house the evening before, when he first began to feel the effects of the poison he had taken, Pery's purpose was to fulfill the promise he had made to Cecília, by seeking an infallible antidote whose existence was known only to the aged chiefs of his tribe, and to the women who assisted them in their medical preparations. His mother, when he set out on his first campaign, had revealed to him this secret, which would save him in case of being wounded by a poisoned arrow. When he saw the despair of his mistress, he felt strong enough to resist the growing lethargy of the poison, and to plunge into the forest in search of the powerful herb that would restore him to life, health, and vigor.

Nevertheless, while he was passing through the woods, it sometimes seemed to him that it was too late, that he would not arrive in time, and he began to fear that he should die away from his mistress, and that his last look would not rest upon her face. He almost repented of having left the house, and not having remained and heaved his last sigh at Cecília's feet, but he remembered that she was expecting him, that she still had need of his life, and the thought gave him new strength.

He penetrated into the densest and dankest portion of the forest, and there in the gloom and silence was enacted between him and nature a scene of savage life, - of that primitive life of which so feeble and distorted an image has reached our times. The day declined, evening came on, and then night, and under that thick-roofed vault where Pery was sleeping as in a sanctuary, not a sound had revealed what there occurred.

When the first reflection of day purpled the horizon the leaves parted, and Pery, weak, staggering, emaciated, as if he had just recovered from a long sickness, left his retreat. He could scarcely stand, and to walk was obliged to support himself by the branches that projected into his path. In this way he proceeded through the forest, and gathered some fruit which in a measure restored his strength.

When he reached the bank of the river he felt his vigor returning, and the vital warmth beginning to reanimate his benumbed body. He threw himself into the water, and when he came out he was another man. A reaction had taken place; his limbs had regained their natural elasticity, and the blood flowed freely in his veins.

He then set about recovering the strength he had lost, and whatever savory and nutritious morsel the forest offered he made tributary to the life-giving banquet in which he celebrated his victory over death and poison.

The sun had been some time up. Pery, when he had finished his meal, proceeded on his way in a pensive mood, when he heard a discharge of fire-arms, the report of which echoed through the forest. He ran in the direction of the shots, and a short distance off in an opening in the forest a grand sight met his eyes.

Álvaro and his nine companions, divided into two columns of five men each, standing back to back, were surrounded by more than a hundred Aymorés, who threw themselves upon them with savage fury. But the waves of that torrent of barbarians, who rushed on with frightful yells, broke against that little column, which seemed

composed not of men, but of steel; the swords played with such rapidity as to render it impenetrable, and no savage approached within the radius of a fathom but to fall dead.

The fight had lasted an hour. It was begun with fire-arms, but the Aymorés attacked with such fury that it had quickly been turned into a hand-to-hand struggle.

At the moment when Pery appeared at the margin of the clearing, a circumstance occurred to change the fortune of the combat. The adventurer whose back was against Álvaro's, carried away by the ardor of the fight, stepped for ward a few paces to strike one of the enemy, when the savages immediately surrounded him, leaving the column broken and Álvaro without defense. Still the brave cavalier continued to per form prodigies of valor; at every turn of his sword there was one enemy the less, one life extinguished at his feet in a river of blood. The savages redoubled their fury against him, and at every attack his dexterous arm moved unerringly, while his blade was scarcely seen to flash in its rapid vibrations. But as soon as the Aymorés saw that the young man was unprotected behind, and exposed to their blows, they concentrated on that point, and one of them advanced, and raising with both hands his heavy war-club, brought it down upon Álvaro's head. The young man fell, but in his fall his sword described one more semicircle and struck down the enemy who had attacked him from behind; the violent pain gave to this last stroke a supernatural force.

As the Indians were about to fall upon the cavalier, Pery leaped into their midst, and seizing the musket that lay at his feet made of it a terrible weapon, a formidable club, whose power was soon felt by the Aymorés. As soon as he found himself free from the enemy, he took Álvaro on his shoulders, and opening a path with his terrible weapon sprang into the forest and disappeared.

A few followed him, but he turned and made them repent of their temerity; laying down his burden, he loaded the musket with the ammunition he found on Álvaro, and sent a ball to meet his most forward pursuer; the rest, knowing him through the previous fight, returned.

Pery's idea was to save Álvaro, not only because of his friendship for him, but for the sake of Cecília, whom he thought loved the cavalier; but finding that his body continued inanimate he supposed him to be dead. Nevertheless he did not desist from his purpose; dead or alive it was his duty to carry him to those who loved him, that they might either restore him to life or shed the last tear over his body.

When Pery ended his narrative, the nobleman, deeply affected, went to the sofa, and grasping the icy hand of the cavalier, said: -

"Farewell for a short time, brave and valiant friend; for a short time! Our separation is but for a few moments; we shall soon meet again in the mansion of the just, where you must be, and where I hope through the grace of God to enter."

Cecília gave to the memory of the young man the last tears, and kneeling at his feet with her mother addressed to heaven a fervent prayer.

Dona Lauriana had exhausted all the resources of the domestic medicine-chest which supplied the lack of professional men, then very rare, especially far away from towns; but the cavalier gave no sign of life.

Dom Antônio, who had understood perfectly what he had to expect from the pretended retirement of the Aymorés, ordered his men to make ready for defense, not because he had the least hope, but because he wished to resist to the last.

Pery, after having answered all Cecília's questions respecting the way in which he had saved himself from the effects of the poison, left the hall, and examined the surroundings of the esplanade. Always indefatigable when his mistress was concerned, he no sooner finished one gigantic undertaking, like that which had taken him to the camp of the Aymorés, than he turned his attention at once to forming another plan to save her.

After his strategical examination he went to the room where he had left his arms, which he found undisturbed. He remembered the request he had made of Álvaro, and reflected on the freak of destiny that gave back life to him, a man thrice dead, and snatched it from the cavalier whom he had left safe and sound.

VIII. A BRIDE.

AN hour after, Pery, leaning out of the window of the room that had belonged to his mistress, was looking attentively at a tree standing at a distance of a few yards. He seemed to be studying the curves of the twisted branches, measuring the distance to them, their height and size, as if on this depended the solution of some great difficulty with which his mind was struggling. While he was wholly absorbed in this minute examination, he felt a timid and delicate hand touch him lightly on the shoulder.

He turned. It was Isabel, who had approached like a shadow, without making the least noise. She had scarcely recovered from her swoon, and a mortal pallor overspread her face, yet her countenance wore an expression of calmness or rather of fixity, which was alarming.

On coming to herself she had cast her eye over the room, as if to satisfy herself that what had occurred was not a dream. The hall was deserted; Dom Antônio had gone out to give his orders; his wife, kneeling in the chapel on a heap of ruins, was praying at the foot of a cross still standing near the altar. In the rear of the apartment on a sofa lay the motionless figure of the cavalier; at his feet a wax candle was burning, which gave forth a pale light. Cecília was at her side, striving to restore her.

When her eye rested on the body of her lover, she rose as if under the impulse of some supernatural power, crossed the hall quickly and knelt in her turn by the side of that bed of death. But it was not to offer a prayer that she knelt; it was to lose herself in the contemplation of that pale and icy face, those cold lips, those sightless eyes, which she loved in spite of death.

Cecília respected her cousin's grief, and with that instinctive delicacy which only women possess, knew that love has a sentiment of diffidence and modesty even in the presence of death. She accordingly went out, that Isabel might weep without restraint.

Some time after Cecília left the room, Isabel rose and walked automatically through the house. Seeing Pery at a distance, she drew near and touched him on the shoulder.

The Indian and the girl had hated each other from the first day of their meeting. In Isabel it was the hatred of a race that degraded her in her own eyes; in Pery it was the natural repugnance which man feels toward those in whom he recognizes an enemy. Therefore Pery, when he saw Isabel standing at his side, was greatly astonished, especially when he noticed the look of entreaty which she bestowed upon him, as though soliciting a favor.

"Pery!"

The Indian was deeply affected by her suffering, and for the first time in his life spoke a word to her.

"Do you want Pery?" said he.

"I came to ask a favor. You will not refuse me, will you?" faltered she.

"Speak: if it is anything that Pery can do, he will not refuse."

"Do you promise me, then?" exclaimed Isabel, while her eyes sparkled with an expression of delight.

"Yes, Pery promises."

"Come!"

With this word she made a sign to the Indian, and followed by him proceeded to the hall, which was still deserted as she had left it. She stopped by the side of the sofa, and pointing to the inanimate body of her lover motioned to Pery to take it in his arms.

The Indian obeyed, and followed Isabel to a retired room at one side of the house; there he laid his burden on a bed, whose curtains the maiden half opened, blushing like a bride.

She blushed because the apartment in which they were was the room she had occupied, and she found it still peopled with the dreams of her love; because the bed which received her lover was her virgin bed; because she was really a bride of the tomb.

Pery, having fulfilled the maiden's wish, withdrew, and returned to his work, which he pursued with untiring constancy. As soon as she found herself alone, Isabel smiled; but her smile partook of the ecstasy of grief, the luxury of suffering, which brings a smile to the lips of martyrs in the last hour. She took from her bosom the glass phial in which she kept her mother's hair, and riveted on it an eager look; but soon shook her head. She had changed her mind; the secret shut up in the phial, the subtle dust that it contained, the death that her mother had confided to her, did not satisfy her; it was too speedy, almost instantaneous.

She then lighted a wax candle that stood on a bureau by the side of an ivory crucifix. Afterward she fastened the door, closed the window, and filled up every crack through which the light of day might enter. The room remained in darkness; just around the burning taper a dim halo shone forth amid the obscurity, and lighted up the image of Christ.

The maiden knelt and offered a short prayer, asking of God a last favor, praying eternity and bliss for her love, which had been so brief on earth.

After her prayer was ended she took the light, placed it at the head of the bed, removed the curtain, and in a sort of trance became lost in the contemplation of her lover.

Álvaro seemed only to be sleeping; his handsome countenance betrayed no alteration; death, in impressing on his features the pallor of wax and marble, had only fixed their expression, and transformed the handsome cavalier into a beautiful statue.

Isabel broke the trance to go again to the bureau, on which were some marine shells of pearly hue, such as are found on our shores, and a basket of many-colored straw.

This basket contained all the aromatic resins, all the perfumes, that the trees of our country afford, such as mastic, benzoin, and balsam.

She placed in one of the shells the greater part of the perfumes, and set fire to a few drops of the benzoin, which communicated the flame to the other resins.

Tufts of whitish smoke, impregnated with intoxicating perfumes, rose in dense spirals, and filled the room with transparent clouds which undulated in the pale light of the taper.

Isabel, seated on the edge of the bed, with the hands of her lover in her own and her eyes fixed on his dear image, murmured disconnected sentences, secrets of her love, inarticulate sounds, which are the true language of the heart.

Sometimes she dreamed that Álvaro was still alive, that he was whispering in her ear the confession of his love, and she spoke to him as if her lover heard her, told him the secrets of her passion, poured out her whole soul in the words that fell from her lips. Her delicate hand brushed away the hair from his forehead, and caressed his icy cheeks and cold, mute lips, as if to draw forth a smile. "Why do you not speak to me?" murmured she gently. "Do you not know your Isabel? Tell me once more that you love me! O, speak that word, that my soul may not distrust its happiness! I entreat you!"

And with attentive ear, with half open lips and palpitating breast, she awaited the sound of that loved voice, the echo of that first and last word of her sad love. But silence alone gave answer; her bosom merely inhaled the clouds of intoxicating perfumes that sent a burning flame coursing through her veins.

The room then presented a weird aspect. In the dim extremity a circle of light stood forth, enveloped in a thick cloud of smoke. In that luminous sphere, like an apparition, appeared Álvaro stretched out on the bed, and Isabel leaning over the face of her lover, to whom she continued to talk, as though he were listening to her. The girl began to feel her breath fail her; her chest was oppressed with suffocation; and yet an inexpressible luxury intoxicated her; a boundless delight resided in those stifling perfumes.

In her delirium she raised herself up, her bosom expanded, and her mouth half-opening pressed against the cold and icy lips of her lover; it was her first and last kiss, her bridal kiss. It was a slow agony, a dreadful nightmare, in which pain contended with pleasure, in which the sensations had at once a refinement of enjoyment and suffering, in which death, while torturing the body, poured into the soul celestial emanations.

Suddenly Isabel thought that Álvaro's lips moved, that a feeble moan escaped from his breast, but a moment before insensible as marble. She supposed she was mistaken. But no; Álvaro was alive, really alive. His hands grasped hers convulsively; his eyes, gleaming with a strange fire, rested on her face; a breath reanimated his lips, which exhaled a word almost inaudible, -

"Isabel!"

The maiden uttered a feeble cry of joy, amazement, fear; in her bewilderment she perceived with horror that she was killing her lover, was sacrificing him through a fatal mistake. With a great effort she raised her head, and sought to reach the window, and let in the air; she knew that her death was inevitable, but she would save Álvaro.

But at the moment she was rising his hands grasped hers and drew her back to the bed, and her eyes again met those of her lover. Isabel no longer had strength to resist and carry out her heroic sacrifice; her head fell, and their lips met

a second time in a long kiss, in which, those twin souls blended in one, took flight to heaven and sought shelter in the bosom of their Creator.

The clouds of smoke and perfume grew denser and denser, and enveloped the lovers like a shroud.

About two o'clock in the afternoon the door was forced open, and a dense mass of smoke poured forth, almost suffocating Cecília and Pery, who stood ready to enter.

The maiden, restless at the long absence of her cousin, learned from Pery that she was in her room; but the Indian kept back part of the truth, he did not tell where he had carried Álvaro's body.

Twice Cecília had gone to the door, listened, and heard nothing; at length she determined to knock and speak to Isabel, but got no response. She called Pery and told him what she had done; the Indian, seized with a presentiment, put his shoulder to the door and forced it open.

When the current of air had driven out the smoke, Cecília could enter and view the scene we have described. She started back, and respecting that mystery of a profound love made a sign to Pery and withdrew.

The Indian closed the door again and followed his mistress.

"She died happy!" said Pery.

Cecília turned full upon him her large blue eyes and blushed.

IX. THE PUNISHMENT.

THE day was rapidly declining and the shades of night were beginning to settle down upon the dark green of the forest. Dom Antônio was standing in the doorway by the side of his wife, with his arm around Cecília's waist. The setting sun shed its light upon this family group, worthy of the majestic picture that formed its background.

The nobleman, Cecília, and her mother, with their eyes upon the horizon, accepted it as a farewell ray, and sent a last adieu to the light of day, to the encircling mountains, the trees, the plains, all Nature. To them that sun was the image of their life; the setting was their last hour; and the shadow of eternity was already enveloping them like the shades of night.

The Aymorés had returned after the fight in which the adventurers sold their lives so dearly, and more and more athirst for revenge, were awaiting the approach of night to attack the house. Certain this time that the weakened enemy could not resist a violent assault, they had taken measures to destroy every means that might favor the escape

of a single white man. This was easy. Except at the stone steps, the rock was perpendicular and inaccessible on all sides. The tree whose branches extended over Pery's cabin offered an avenue of approach, but only to one of his strength and agility. The savages, who did not purpose that one of the enemy should escape, and least of all Pery, cut down the tree, and thus destroyed the only means by which a man could leave the rock at the moment of attack.

At the first stroke of the ax upon the trunk, Pery started and sprang to his carbine, but at once smiled and quietly placed the weapon against the wall. Without paying further attention to the Aymorés, he resumed the work he had been engaged upon, and finished twisting a rope with the fibers of one of the palms that formed the supports of his cabin. He had his plan, and to carry it into effect had begun by cutting down the two palm trees and carrying them to Cecília's room. Then he split one of them, and was engaged all the morning in twisting that long cord, to which he attached great importance. While he was finishing his work, he heard the tree fall upon the rock; he went to the window, and his face expressed extreme gratification. The *oleo* had fallen against the precipice, lifting its aged, but still leafy and vigorous, branches to a great height.

The Aymorés, at rest on that score, continued their preparations for the attack, which they intended to make during the dead hours of the night.

When the sun sank below the horizon and twilight gave place to darkness, Pery went to the hall. Ayres Gomes, ever indefatigable, was on guard at the armory door; Dom Antônio was leaning back in his armchair; and Cecília, sitting on his knee, was rejecting a cup which her father offered her.

"Drink, my Cecília," said the nobleman, "it is a cordial that will do you much good."

"To what purpose, father? For an hour, if we have so long to live, it is not worth while!" answered the girl with a sad smile.

"You are mistaken! We are not yet wholly lost."

"Have you any hope?" asked she incredulously.

"Yes, I have a hope, and it will not disappoint me!" answered Dom Antônio solemnly.

"What is it? Tell me!"

"Are you curious?" replied the nobleman with a smile. "I will tell you, but only when you have done what I ask."

"Do you wish me to drink this cup?"

"Yes."

Cecília took the cup from her father's hand, and after drinking turned to him an inquiring look.

“The hope I have, my daughter, is that no enemy will ever cross the threshold of that door; you may trust your father’s word and sleep in peace. God watches over us.” Kissing her forehead, he rose, took her in his arms, and placing her in the chair, went to see what was going on out of doors.

Pery, who had witnessed this dialogue between the father and daughter, was occupied in searching in the room for various objects which he apparently needed. As soon as he found what he wanted, he went toward the door.

“Where are you going?” said Cecília, who had watched all his movements.

“Pery will return, mistress.”

“But why do you leave us?”

“Because it is necessary.”

“At any rate, return soon. Ought we not to die all together, by the same death?”

The Indian was agitated. “No; Pery will die, but you shall live, mistress.”

“Why live after one has lost all one’s friends?”

Cecília’s eyes became heavy, her head nodded, and she fell back in her chair overcome with sleep. “No! - rather die like Isabel!” murmured she, scarcely awake. A peaceful smile played upon her half-open lips, and a gentle and measured breathing heaved her breast.

Pery was frightened by this sudden sleep, which did not appear natural, and by the pallor that suddenly overspread Cecília’s face. His eyes fell upon the cup standing on the table; he took a few drops of the liquor remaining in the bottom on his lips and tasted it. He could not tell what it was, but was satisfied that it was not what he had feared. He thrust aside the thought that had entered his mind, and remembered that Dom Antônio smiled when asking his daughter to drink, and that his hand did not tremble when he gave her the cup. At rest in this respect, the Indian, who had no time to lose, hastened to the room he now occupied.

The night had already set in, and a deep darkness enveloped the house and its surroundings. No extraordinary event had occurred to modify the desperate situation of the family; the sinister calm that precedes great tempests was hovering over the heads of those victims, who were counting not the hours but the moments of life that remained to them.

Dom Antônio was walking up and down the hall, with the same serenity as in the quiet and peaceful days of old; now and then he would stop at the door of the armory, look fondly upon his wife kneeling in prayer and his sleeping daughter, and again resume his walk.

The adventurers standing near the door followed with their eyes the figure of the nobleman as it disappeared in the dim extremity of the hall, or stood forth fresh and vigorous in the luminous circle that radiated from the silver lamp hanging from the ceiling. Silent and resigned, not one of those men let fall a single complaint, a single murmur; the example of their chief kindled in their hearts the heroic courage of the soldier dying in a holy cause.

Before obeying Dom Antônio's order, they had executed the sentence pronounced against Loredano, and any one at that moment crossing the esplanade would have seen the flames ascending around the post to which the friar was bound. The Italian already felt the fire drawing near and the smoke gathering in a dense cloud about him. It is impossible to describe the rage, anger, and fury, that took possession of him in these moments preceding his punishment.

But let us return to the hall, where the principal characters of this story were assembled, and where scenes, perhaps the most important of the drama, are to be enacted.

The deep calm that reigned in that solitude had not been disturbed; all was silent, and in the thick darkness of night objects could not be distinguished at the distance of a few feet. Suddenly streaks of fire shot through the air and fell upon the building. They were the burning arrows of the savages, announcing the beginning of the attack.

For a few minutes there was a rain of fire, a shower of flames upon the house. The adventurers grew pale; Dom Antônio smiled.

"The moment has come, my friends. We have an hour to live; prepare to die like Christians and Portuguese. Open the doors, that we may see the sky."

The nobleman said that they had an hour to live, because, having destroyed the stone steps, the savages could reach the esplanade only by scaling the rock, and however great their agility this would consume at least an hour.

When the adventurers opened the doors, a figure glided past them in the darkness, and entered the hall. It was Pery.

X. A CHRISTIAN.

THE Indian went at once to Dom Antônio.

"Pery wishes to save his mistress."

The nobleman shook his head doubtfully.

“Listen!” replied the Indian. Putting his lips to Dom Antônio’s ear, he spoke to him in a low voice, and in a quick and earnest tone: “Everything is ready; leave; descend the river. When the moon extends her bow you will reach the tribe of the Goytacazes. Pery’s mother knows you; a hundred warriors will accompany you to the great city of the white men.”

Dom Antônio heard in profound silence the words of the Indian, and when he ended grasped his hand warmly.

“No, Pery; what you propose is impossible. Dom Antônio cannot abandon his house, his family, and his friends, in the moment of danger, even to save that which he loves most in this world. A Portuguese nobleman cannot flee before the enemy, whoever he may be; he dies avenging his own death.”

Pery made a sign of despair. “So you do not wish to save mistress?”

“I cannot,” answered the nobleman; “my duty commands me to remain and share the lot of my comrades.”

The Indian, in his fanatical devotion, did not comprehend how a reason could exist sufficient to sacrifice Cecília’s life.

“Pery thought that you loved mistress!” said he, scarcely knowing what he said.

Dom Antônio looked at him with an expression of dignity and nobility. “I forgive the injury you have done me, my friend, because it is another proof of your great devotion. But, believe me, if it were necessary for me to devote my own life alone to the barbarous sacrifice of the savages to save my daughter, I would do it gladly.”

“Then why do you refuse what Pery asks?”

“Why? Because what you ask is not a sacrifice; it is a disgrace, - a betrayal. Would you abandon your wife, your comrades, to save yourself from the enemy, Pery?”

The Indian hung down his head with discouragement.

“Besides, this undertaking demands strength that a man of my years cannot count upon. There were two persons who might have accomplished it.”

“Who?” asked Pery with a ray of hope.

“One was my son, who at this moment is far from here; the other left us this morning and now awaits us, - Álvaro.”

“Pery has done what he could for his mistress; you do not wish to save her; Pery will die at her feet.”

“Die?” said the nobleman. “When you have liberty and life at your disposal? Do you think I will consent to this? Never! Go, Pery; preserve the recollection of your friends; our souls will follow you on earth. Farewell. Go, time urges.”

The Indian lifted up his head proudly and indignantly. “Pery has hazarded his life often enough for you to have the right to die with you. You cannot abandon your comrades; the slave cannot abandon his mistress.”

“You do me injustice, my friend; I expressed a wish, I did not mean to do you a wrong. If you demand a share in the sacrifice, it belongs to you, and you are worthy of it; remain!”

A yell from the savages reverberated in the air. Dom Antônio made a sign to the adventurers, and went into the armory.

Cecília, asleep in the chair, was smiling as if some cheerful dream were rocking her in her peaceful sleep. Her somewhat pale face, framed by the fair tresses of her hair, had the sweet expression of happy innocence. The nobleman, in the contemplation of his daughter, experienced a poignant grief, and almost repented not having accepted Pery’s offer, and at least attempted this last effort to save her budding life. But could he prove false to his past, and fail in the imperious duty that bound him to die at his post? Could he betray in his last hour those who had shared his lot? Such was the sentiment of honor in those ancient cavaliers that Dom Antônio did not for a moment entertain the thought of flight to save his daughter. If there had been any other way, he would have accepted it as a favor from heaven; but that was impossible.

While his mind was engaged in this cruel struggle, Pery standing by Cecília’s side appeared anxious still to protect her from the inevitable death. He seemed to be expecting some unforeseen succor, some miracle, to save his mistress, and to be awaiting the moment to do for her whatever was possible to man.

Dom Antônio, observing the resolution depicted on Pery’s face, became again lost in thought. When, after a moment’s reflection, he lifted up his head, his eyes were bright with a ray of hope. He went to Pery, and taking his hand said in a deep and solemn voice, -

“If you were a Christian, Pery!”

The Indian turned, greatly surprised at these words. “Why?” asked he.

“Why?” said the nobleman slowly. “Because if you were a Christian I would intrust you with the deliverance of Cecília, and I am convinced that you would take her to Rio de Janeiro to my sister.”

The Indian’s face became bright; his breast panted with happiness; his quivering lips could scarcely articulate the whirlwind of words that came from his inmost soul. “Pery will become a Christian!” cried he.

Dom Antônio gave him a look moist with gratitude. “Our religion,” said the nobleman, “permits any man in the last hour to administer baptism. We now have our feet upon the tomb. Kneel, Pery!”

The Indian fell at the nobleman’s feet, who laid his hands upon his head.

“Be a Christian! I give you my name.”

Pery kissed the cross of the sword which the nobleman offered him, and rose proudly, ready to face every danger to save his mistress.

“I refrain from exacting from you a promise to respect and defend my daughter. I know your noble soul, I know your heroism and your sublime devotion for Cecília. But I wish you to take another oath.”

“What is it? Pery is ready to do anything.”

“Swear that if you cannot save my daughter, she shall not fall into the hands of the enemy.”

“Pery swears that he will take his mistress to your sister, and that if the Lord of Heaven does not permit him to fulfill his promise, no enemy shall touch your daughter, though it be necessary to burn an entire forest.”

“Very well; I am at ease. I place my Cecília in your keeping, and die contented. You can go.”

“Order all the doors to be fastened.”

The adventurers obeyed the nobleman’s order, and all the doors were closed and secured. The Indian took this measure to gain time.

The shouts and yells of the savages, which continued with some interruptions, approached nearer and nearer, and it was perceived that they were at that moment scaling the rock. Some minutes elapsed in cruel suspense. Dom Antônio placed a last kiss on his daughter’s forehead; Dona Lauriana clasped her to her bosom, and wrapped her in a silk mantle. Pery with attentive ear and eye fixed upon the door, was waiting. Leaning lightly against the back of the chair, at times he quivered with impatience, and stamped his foot upon the floor.

All at once a loud clamor resounded around the house; the flames licked with their tongues of fire the apertures of the doors and windows; the building trembled to its foundation with the shock of the column of savages, who rushed furiously into the midst of the conflagration.

Pery, as soon as he heard the first cry, bent over the chair and took Cecília in his arms; when the tumult reached the great door of the hall, he had already disappeared.

Notwithstanding the deep darkness that reigned in every part of the house, he did not hesitate for an instant, but went straight to the room his mistress had occupied, and passed out of the window. One of the palms by the side of his cabin extended over the precipice, and rested at the distance of a few feet on one of the branches of the tree that the Aymorés had cut down during the day, to deprive the occupants of the house of the last hope of escape.

Pery, clasping Cecília in his arms, placed his foot on this frail bridge, whose convex surface was at most but a few inches broad. Any one at that moment turning his eyes in that direction would have seen in the lurid glare of the conflagration a rigid figure gliding slowly
over the ravine, like one of those phantoms that, according to popular belief, were wont to traverse at midnight the ancient battlements of some ruined castle. The palm rocked to and fro, but Pery, maintaining his balance over the chasm, advanced slowly toward the opposite declivity.

The shouts of the savages reverberated in the air mingled with the noise of the *tacapes*, as they shook the doors of the hall and the walls of the building. Paying no attention to the tumultuous scene he was leaving behind him, he gained the opposite declivity, and grasping with one hand the branches of the tree, succeeded in reaching the ground without the least accident. Then making a circuit, to avoid the camp of the Aymorés, he proceeded to the river, where he found concealed among the leaves the little canoe that the occupants of the house formerly used in crossing the Paquequer.

During his absence of an hour after leaving Cecília asleep, he had made everything ready for the hazardous enterprise that was to save his mistress. Thanks to his astonishing activity, he constructed with the aid of the rope the hanging bridge over the chasm, ran to the river, moored the canoe in what seemed to be the most favorable place, and in two trips carried to this little bark, which was to be Cecília's home for some days, everything that the girl might need. There were clothes, a damask quilt, which might be used as a bed, and some provisions that were left in the house; he even remembered that Dom Antônio would need money when he reached Rio de Janeiro, for Pery did not imagine that the nobleman would hesitate to save his daughter.

On reaching the river bank, the Indian laid his mistress in the bottom of the canoe, like a child in its cradle, wrapped her in the silk mantle to protect her from the night dew, and taking the oar, made the canoe leap like a fish over the water.

After advancing a few yards he saw through an opening in the forest the house on the rock lighted up by the flames of the conflagration, which was beginning to rage with considerable intensity. All at once a weird and terrible scene passed before his eyes, like one of those fleeting visions that flash upon the disordered imagination and at once go out.

The front of the house was in darkness; the fire had control of the other sides, and the wind was driving it toward the rear. Pery at the first glance had seen the forms of the Aymorés moving in the shadow, and the fearful and horrid

figure of Loredano amid the flames that were devouring him. Suddenly the front of the building fell upon the esplanade, crushing in its fall a large number of savages. It was then that the weird picture presented itself to Pery's eyes.

The hall was a sea of fire; the figures moving amid the glare seemed to be swimming on waves of flame. In the rear stood out the majestic form of Dom Antônio de Mariz, erect in the center of the armory, holding aloft in his left hand an image of Christ, and with his right pointing his pistol to the dark cavern where slept the volcano. His wife, calm and resigned, was clasping his knees; Ayres Gomes and the few remaining adventurers, kneeling motionless at his feet, formed an appropriate setting for that statue worthy of a master's chisel.

On the heap of ruins formed by the falling wall were seen the horrid figures of the savages, like evil spirits dancing amid the infernal flames.

All this Pery saw at a single glance of the eye, like a living picture lighted up for a moment by the instantaneous flash of the lightning.

A dreadful explosion echoed throughout the solitude; the earth trembled; and the waters of the river rose as if driven by a whirlwind. Darkness settled down upon the rock, but a moment before bright with flames, and everything fell back again into the deep silence of night.

A groan escaped from Pery, perhaps the sole witness of this great catastrophe. But controlling his grief, he bent to the oar, and the canoe flew over the smooth surface of the Paquequer.

XI. EPILOGUE.

WHEN the sun, rising in the horizon, illuminated the plains, a heap of ruins covered the banks of the Paquequer. Great fragments of rock, struck off at a single blow and strewn over the plain, seemed to have leaped from the gigantic hammer of some new Cyclops. The eminence on which the house stood had disappeared, and in its place was seen merely a wide fissure, like the crater of some subterranean volcano. The up rooted trees, the torn earth, the blackened ashes covering the forest, proclaimed that over that region had passed one of those convulsions of Nature that leave behind them death and destruction.

Here and there among the piles of ruins appeared an Indian woman, remnant of the tribe of Aymorés, who had remained to bewail the death of her friends, and to carry to the other tribes the news of this terrible revenge.

Any one at that moment hovering over that solitude, and casting his eyes over the vast expanse that opened around him, if his vision could have penetrated to the distance of many leagues, would have seen afar, moving rapidly on the broad current of the Parahyba, an indistinct and shadowy object.

It was Pery's canoe, which, driven by the oar and the morning breeze, was running with astonishing speed, like a shadow flying before the first rays of day.

All night the Indian had rowed without a moment's rest; he was not ignorant that Dom Antônio, in his terrible revenge, had exterminated the Aymorés, but he wished to get away from the scene of the calamity and draw near to his native plains. It was not love of country, always so powerful in the human heart; it was not eagerness to see his cabin, reposing on the river bank, and to embrace his mother and friends, that swayed his soul at that moment and gave him such ardor. But it was the thought that he was going to save his mistress, and fulfill the oath he had sworn to the nobleman; it was the pride that took possession of him when he thought that his courage and strength sufficed to overcome every obstacle, and accomplish the mission he had undertaken.

When the sun in mid career poured down torrents of light upon the vast wilderness, Pery felt that it was time to shelter Cecília from the burning rays, and brought the canoe to the shore under the shade of branching trees. The girl, wrapped in her silk mantle, with her head resting on the bow of the boat, was still sleeping the same tranquil sleep as the evening before; her color had returned, and under the transparent whiteness of her skin shone those rosy tints, that pleasing hue which only Nature, sublime artist, can create.

Pery took the canoe in his arms as if it had been a tiny cradle, and placed it on the grass that covered the bank of the river; then he sat down by the side of it, and with his eyes fixed on Cecília, waited for her to come out of that prolonged sleep, which began to disquiet him. He trembled when he thought of the grief his mistress would feel when she learned the calamity he had witnessed, and did not feel strong enough to answer the first look of surprise that she would cast about her when she awoke in the midst of the wilderness. The tenderest mother would not have watched over her son as this devoted friend watched over his mistress while her sleep lasted. A ray of the sun penetrating through the leaves and playing on the maiden's face, a bird singing in the trees, an insect hopping on the grass, - everything that might disturb her repose he chased away. Every minute that passed was a source of new anxiety to him; but it was also a moment more of rest and quiet for her to enjoy, before learning the misfortune that weighed upon her and had deprived her of her family.

A long sigh heaved Cecília's breast; her pretty blue eyes opened and closed, dazzled by the light of day. She passed her delicate hand over the lids, as if to drive sleep away, and her clear, sweet look rested on Pery's face.

A low cry of pleasure escaped her, and sitting up quickly, she looked with surprise and wonder around the leafy pavilion that sheltered her. She seemed to be interrogating the trees, the river, the sky; but all was mute. Pery did not

venture to utter a word. He saw what was passing in Cecília's heart, but had not the courage to name the first letter of the enigma that she must soon understand.

At length the maiden, looking down to see where she was, discovered the canoe; and casting a rapid glance toward the vast bed of the Parahyba flowing lazily through the forest, turned white as the cambric of her robes. She turned to the Indian with trembling lips and suspended breath, and clasping her little hands, cried: -

"My father! My father!"

Pery let his head fall upon his breast, and hid his face in his hands.

"Dead!... My mother dead too!... All dead!" Overcome with grief, she pressed convulsively her sobbing breast; and drooping like the delicate calyx of a flower that night has filled with dew, burst into tears.

"Pery could save only you, mistress!" murmured the Indian sadly.

Cecília held up her head proudly.

"Why did you not let me die with my friends?" cried she in feverish excitement. "Did I ask you to save me? Did I need your services?" Her countenance assumed an expression of great resolution. "Take me to the place where the body of my father rests; it is there that his daughter should be. Then you may go. I do not need you."

Pery was greatly moved. "Listen, mistress," faltered he in a submissive tone.

The maiden gave him so commanding, so sovereign a look, that he became mute; and turning away his face, concealed the tears that moistened his cheeks.

Cecília went to the brink of the river, and turning her eyes in the direction in which she supposed the place where she had lived lay, knelt and offered up a long and fervent prayer. When she rose she was more calm. Her grief had imbibed the sublime consolation of religion; that balm that instills into the heart the hope of a heavenly life, in which those who have loved each other on earth shall meet again. She could then reflect on what had occurred during the past evening, and sought to recall the circumstances that had preceded the death of her family. All her recollections, however, reached only to the moment when, already half asleep, she was talking with Pery, and spoke that frank and innocent word that had escaped from the depths of her soul.

"Rather die like Isabel!"

At the recollection of that word she blushed; and finding herself alone in the wilderness with Pery, experienced a vague and undefined disquietude, - a feeling of apprehension and fear, the cause of which she could not explain.

Could this sudden distrust have its origin in the anger she had felt because the Indian had saved her life, and rescued her from the calamity that had overwhelmed her family? No, that was not the cause. On the contrary, Cecília knew that she had been unjust to her friend, who had perhaps accomplished impossibilities for her; and had it not been for the instinctive dread that had taken possession of her soul, she would at once have called him to her and asked pardon for those harsh and cruel words.

She raised her eyes timidly, and met Pery's sad and beseeching look. She could not resist; she forgot her fears, and a faint smile flitted across her lips.

"Pery!"

The Indian trembled with joy, and fell at Cecília's feet, whom he once more found the kind mistress she had ever been.

"Forgive Pery, mistress."

"It is you who should forgive me, for I have caused you much suffering; have I not? But you must know! - I could not forsake my poor father!"

"He commanded Pery to save you!" said the Indian.

"How?" exclaimed the girl. "Tell me, my friend."

The Indian related the events of the previous evening, from the time when Cecília fell asleep to the moment of the explosion, which left of the house only a heap of ruins. He said that he had made everything ready for Dom Antônio to escape and rescue Cecília, but that the nobleman tad refused, saying that his honor commanded him to die at his post.

"My noble father!" murmured the girl, drying her tears.

There was a moment's silence, after which Pery concluded his narrative, and related how Dom Antônio had baptized him, and entrusted to him the safe-keeping of his daughter.

"You are a Christian, Pery?" cried she, her eyes sparkling with inexpressible delight.

"Yes; your father said: 'Pery, you are a Christian. I give you my name.'"

"I thank thee, O God!" said the maiden, clasping her hands, and lifting her eyes to heaven.

Pery rose and gathered some delicate fruit for his mistress's repast. The sun had broken its force; it was time to continue the journey, and take advantage of the cool of evening to accomplish the distance that separated them from the camp of the Goytacazes. The Indian approached the maiden timidly,

"What do you wish Pery to do, mistress?"

"I don't know," answered Cecília undecidedly.

"Do you not wish Pery to take you to the city of the white men?"

"Is it the will of my father? You must carry it out."

"Pery promised Dom Antônio to take you to his sister."

He placed the canoe in the water, and taking Cecília in his arms, laid her in the little boat.

The evening was superb; the rays of the setting sun, penetrating through the foliage, gilded the white flowers that grew on the margin of the river. The doves began to coo in the forest, and the breeze came laden with sylvan odors. The canoe glided over the surface of the water like a heron borne on the current. Pery, seated in the prow, plied the oar. Cecília, half-reclining in the stern on a carpet of leaves which he had arranged, buried herself in her thoughts, and inhaled the perfumes of the plants and the freshness of the air and water.

When her eyes met Pery's the long lashes fell, and concealed for a moment their sad but sweet expression.

THE night was still. The canoe, floating on the surface of the river, threw aside flakes of foam, which sparkled for a moment in the starlight, and then vanished like woman's smile. The breeze had lulled, and sleeping nature was breathing the tepid and fragrant calm of American nights, so full of enchantment and delight.

The voyage had been silent; those two creatures abandoned in the midst of the wilderness, alone with Nature, sat mute, as if they feared to awake the deep echo of the solitude. Cecília ran over in her memory her innocent and quiet life, whose golden thread had been so cruelly broken; but it was especially the last year, since the day of Pery's unlooked-for arrival, that was pictured in her imagination.

Why did she interrogate thus the days that she had lived in the calm of happiness? Why did her mind revert to the past, and seek to gather up all those circumstances to which in the careless innocence of her earlier years she had given so little consideration? She could not herself have explained her emotions, her soul had been illuminated by a sudden revelation, new horizons were opening to the chaste conceptions of her mind. Reverting to the past, she wondered at her own existence, as the eyes are dazzled by light after a deep sleep; she did not recognize herself in the image of what she had formerly been, in the careless and playful child. Her whole life was changed; misfortune had wrought this sudden revolution, and another sentiment, still vague and confused, was perhaps about to complete

her mysterious transformation into a woman. Everything about her partook of this change; the colors had harmonious tints, the air intoxicating perfumes, the light soft reflections, which her senses did not perceive. A flower, which before was to her but a beautiful form, now seemed a sentient being; the breeze, which formerly passed like a simple breath of air, now murmured in her ear ineffable melodies, mystic notes, that found an echo in her heart.

Pery, thinking his mistress asleep, rowed gently, so as not to disturb her repose. Fatigue began to tell upon him; in spite of his indomitable courage and powerful will his strength was exhausted. Scarcely had he come off conqueror in the terrible struggle with the poison, when he had entered upon the almost impossible undertaking of saving his mistress; for three days his eyes had not closed, his mind had not had a moment's rest. Whatever the intelligence and power of man could do, he had done. And yet it was not weariness of body that was overpowering him, but the violent emotions he had experienced during that time.

What he had felt when he hung suspended over the chasm, and the life of his mistress was at the mercy of a false step, a vibration of the fragile trunk that served him for a bridge, no one could imagine. What he suffered when Cecília in her despair at the death of her father blamed him for having saved her, and bade him take her back to the place where reposed the ashes of the aged nobleman, it is impossible to describe. They were hours of martyrdom, of dreadful suffering, and his soul would have yielded, if it had not found in his unbending will and sublime devotion a support against pain and an incentive to triumph over all obstacles.

It was these emotions that overcame him, even after being themselves overcome. He knew that his iron muscles, willing slaves obeying his slightest wish, had been stretched like a bowstring since the flight, and remembered that his mistress needed him, and that he ought to improve the moments while she was reposing by seeking in sleep new vigor and new strength.

He gained the middle of the river, and selecting a place not reached by branches of the trees that grew upon the banks, moored the canoe to the plants floating on the surface of the water. All was quiet; the shore was many yards away; therefore his mistress might sleep without danger on this silvery floor under the blue vault of heaven; the wavelets would rock her in her cradle, the stars would keep watch over her sleep.

Free from disquietude, Pery rested his head on the edge of the canoe; a moment later his heavy eyelids closed gradually. His last look, the vague and uncertain look that flits over the pupil when half asleep, saw outlined in the darkness a graceful white form bending gently toward him.

It was not a dream, that pretty vision. Cecília, feeling the canoe at rest, awoke from her reverie, sat up, and leaning forward a little, saw that her friend was asleep, and blamed herself for not having long before insisted on his taking rest. Her first feeling on finding herself alone was the reverential dread that the solitary being in the midst of a wilderness always experiences in the dead hours of night. The silence seems to speak; the gloom is peopled with

invisible beings; and objects, though stationary, appear to move through space. It is at the same time nothingness with its boundless vacancy, and chaos with its confusion, its darkness, its uncreated forms; the soul feels that life and light are wanting round about. Cecília received this impression with a religious awe, but did not suffer herself to be overcome with fear; misfortune had habituated her to danger, and her confidence in her companion was such that even while he was asleep she felt that he was watching over her.

Observing him as he slept, the maiden could not help admiring the rude beauty of his features, the regularity of his stately profile, the expression of strength and energy that lent animation to his wild but noble figure.

How is it that till then she had seen in that noble presence only a friendly face? How had her eyes passed, without perceiving them, over those features stamped with so much energy? The physical revelation that had illuminated her vision was only the result of the moral revelation that had enlightened her mind; formerly she saw with her corporal eyes, now she saw with the eyes of her soul. Pery, who for a year had been to her only a friend, suddenly assumed the aspect of a hero. When surrounded by her family, she esteemed him; in the bosom of this solitude, she admired him.

As the pictures of great painters need light, a bright background, and a simple setting, to exhibit the perfection of their coloring and the purity of their lines, so Pery needed the wilderness to reveal him in all the splendor of his natural beauty. Among civilized men he was an ignorant Indian, sprung from a barbarous race, whom civilization rejected and marked as a captive. Although to Cecília and Dom Antônio he was a friend, he was at the same time only a slave. Here, however, all distinctions disappeared. The child of the woods, returning to the bosom of his mother, recovered his liberty. He was the king of the wilderness, the lord of the forests, ruling by right of strength and courage. The lofty mountains, the clouds, the cataracts, the great rivers, the ancient trees, formed the throne, the canopy, the mantle, and the scepter, of this monarch of the woods, encircled by all the majesty and all the pomp of nature. What an outpouring of gratitude and admiration was revealed in Cecília's look! It was then for the first time that she comprehended all the self-sacrifice of Pery's devotion to her.

THE hours ran silently by in that mute contemplation. The cool breeze that announces the approach of day fanned the maiden's face, and soon the first ray of dawn dispelled the darkness that rested on the horizon. Against the dim outline of the forest shone clear and bright the morning star; the waters of the river undulated gently, and the leaves of the palms moved noisily.

The maiden recalled her peaceful wakings of other days, her careless mornings, her happy prayer in which she thanked God for the blessings he had showered upon her and her family. A tear trickled down her cheek and fell on Pery's face. He opened his eyes, and seeing still the pleasing vision that had lulled him to sleep, thought it was only a continuation of his dream.

Cecília smiled upon him, and passed her little hand over the half-shut eyelids of her friend. “Sleep,” said she, “sleep; Cecy is watching.”

The music of these words woke him thoroughly.

“No!” stammered he, ashamed of having yielded to fatigue. “Pery feels strong.”

“But you must need rest! You have slept such a little while!”

“The day is dawning; Pery must watch over his mistress.”

“And why shall not your mistress also watch over you? You would take all, and not leave me even gratitude!”

The Indian fixed his eyes on the maiden with a look full of wonder. “Pery does not understand what you say. The turtle dove, when she is crossing the plain and feels tired, rests on the wing of her stronger mate; he guards the nest while she sleeps; he goes in search of food, defends her and protects her. You are like the turtle dove, mistress.”

Cecília blushed at this artless comparison. “And you?” asked she, confused and agitated.

“Pery is your slave,” answered he naturally.

The maiden shook her head with a sportive air. “The turtle dove has no slave.”

Pery’s eyes sparkled; an exclamation escaped from his lips. “Your -”

Cecília with palpitating breast, flushed cheeks, and moistened eyes, placed her hand on his lips, and checked the word that she herself in her innocent coquetry had provoked. “You are my brother!” said she with a divine smile.

Pery looked up to heaven, as if to make it the confidant of his happiness.

The light of dawn was spreading over the forest and plains like a thin veil; the morning star shone in all its splendor. Cecília knelt. “*‘Hail, queen!’ ”*

The Indian contemplated her with an expression of ineffable happiness.

“You are a Christian, Pery!” said she turning to him with a beseeching look.

Her friend understood her, and kneeling, clasped his hands like her.

“You must repeat all my words, and not forget them. Will you?”

“They come from your lips, mistress.”

“Mistress, no! Sister.”

Soon the murmurings of the water were mingled with the touching accents of Cecília’s voice, as she recited the Christian hymn, so replete with holy and poetic power. Pery’s lips repeated like an echo the sacred words.

HAVING finished the Christian prayer, perhaps the first that those ancient trees had heard, they proceeded on their voyage.

As soon as the sun reached the zenith, Pery as on the previous day sought a sheltered spot where they might pass the hours of greatest heat. The canoe landed in a little bay; Cecília sprang ashore; and her companion selected a shady place where she might repose.

“Wait here, Pery will soon be back.”

“Where are you going?” asked the maiden anxiously.

“To get some fruit for you.”

“I am not hungry.”

“You can keep it.”

“Very well; I will go with you.”

“No; Pery cannot consent to it.”

“Why not? Do you not like to have me near you?”

“Look at your clothes; look at your foot, mistress; the thorns would injure you.”

In fact, Cecília was clad in a light cambric robe, and her little foot, which rested on the turf, had on a silk buskin.

“Will you leave me alone, then?” said she, saddening.

The Indian stood for a moment undecided, but suddenly his face brightened. He cut the stalk of an iris that was swaying in the breeze, and presented the flower to the maiden.

“Listen,” said he. “The old men of the tribe have heard from their fathers that the soul of man, when it leaves the body, conceals itself in a flower, and remains there till the bird of heaven comes and gets it, and carries it thither, far way. It is for this reason that you see he *guanumby*[35] from flower to lower, kissing one, kissing another, and hen flap its wings and fly away.”

Cecília, accustomed to the poetic language of the Indian, waited for the last word to make his meaning plain. He continued: -

“Pery will not carry his soul away in his body, but will leave it in this flower. You will not be alone.”

She smiled, and taking the flower, hid it in her bosom.

“It will keep me company. Go, my brother, and return soon.”

“Pery will not be far away; if you call him, he will hear you.”

“And will answer me, won’t you? That I may feel that you are near me.”

The Indian, before leaving, encircled the place where Cecília was with a line of fires made of various kinds of aromatic wood. In this way he rendered the retreat inaccessible. The river was on one side, and on the other the flames, which would keep off dangerous animals and above all reptiles, while the scented smoke from the fires would drive away even the insects. Pery would not suffer a wasp or even a fly to harm the skin of his mistress, or suck a drop of her precious blood. Cecília might feel perfectly safe as if in a palace; and indeed this cool and shady nook, for which the grass served as a carpet, the leaves as a canopy, the festoons of flowers as curtains, the *sabiás* as an orchestra, the river as a mirror, and the rays of the sun as golden arabesques, was fit to be the palace of the queen of the woods.

The maiden observed the care with which her friend provided for her safety, and followed him with her eyes until he disappeared in the forest. Then she felt loneliness extend its arms around her and enfold her; unconsciously she raised her hand to her bosom, and drew out the flower that Pery had given her. In spite of her Christian faith, she could not overcome the innocent superstition that found a place in her heart; it seemed to her as she looked on the iris that she was not alone, but that Pery’s soul was with her.

Where is there a youthful breast that does not harbor one of those charming illusions that are begotten with the fire of the first rays of love? What young girl is there that does not consult the oracle of a marigold, and does not see in a black butterfly the prophetic sibyl that foretells the ruin of her brightest hope? Like humanity in its infancy, the heart in its earliest years has its mythology, a mythology more beautiful and more poetical than the creations of Greece; love is its Olympus, peopled with gods and goddesses of celestial and immortal beauty.

Cecília loved; the pretty and innocent girl sought to deceive herself by attributing the sentiment that filled her soul to a sisterly affection, and concealing under the sweet name of brother another still sweeter which trembled on her lips, but which her lips did not dare to pronounce.

Even while alone a thought would now and then pass through her mind, kindling her cheeks with a blush, and causing her bosom to heave and her head to droop gently, like the stalk of a delicate plant when the heat of the sun is fertilizing its flowers. Of what was she thinking, with her eyes on the iris, which was fanned by her breath, her eye-lids half closed, and her body resting on her knees? She was thinking of the past which would not return, of the present which must quickly flow by, and of the future which appeared to her vague, uncertain, and confused. She was thinking that of all her world there only remained a brother by blood, of whose fate she was ignorant and a brother of the soul, on whom she had concentrated all her affection. A feeling of deep sadness clouded her face when she thought of her father, her mother, of Isabel, Álvaro, of all those she had loved, and who had for her constituted the universe; what consoled her was the hope that the only two hearts that remained would never abandon her. And this made her happy; she wished nothing more; she asked of God no further happiness than what she would experience in living with her friends and filling up the future with recollections of the past.

The shadow of the trees began to kiss the surface of the river, and Pery had not yet returned. Fearing that something had happened to him, Cecília called his name. The Indian answered from a distance, and soon after made his appearance among the trees. His time had not been uselessly employed, to judge by what he brought.

“How long you have been!” said Cecília, rising and going to meet him.

“You were composed; Pery improved the opportunity so as not to leave you tomorrow.”

“Tomorrow only?”

“Yes, because the next day we shall arrive.”

“Where?” asked the maiden eagerly.

“In the country of the Goytacazes, at Pery’s cabin, where you will have at your disposal all the warriors of the tribe.”

“And then how shall we get to Rio de Janeiro?”

“Have no fears. The Goytacazes have *igaras*[36] large as that tree which reaches the clouds; when the warriors ply the oar, they fly over the water like the white-winged *atyaty*[37]. Before the moon, now new, has waned, Pery will leave you with your father’s sister.”

“Leave me!” cried she, turning pale. “Would you forsake me?”

“Pery is an Indian,” said he sadly; “he cannot live in the city of the white men.”

“Why?” asked the maiden with anxiety. “Are you not a Christian like Cecy?”

“Yes; because it was necessary to be a Christian to save you; but Pery will die an Indian like Ararê.”

“O, no,” said she, “I will teach you to know God, our Lady, her virgins, and her angels. You shall live with me and never leave me!”

“See, mistress; the flower which Pery gave you is withered, because it has been torn from the stem, and the flower has been in your bosom. Pery in the city of the white men, though with you, will be like this flower; you will be ashamed to look upon him.”

“Pery!” exclaimed the girl, offended.

“You are kind, but all who have your color have not your heart. There the Indian would be a slave of slaves; here he is lord of the plains and commands the mightiest.”

Cecília, admiring the reflection of a noble pride that shone on his forehead, felt that she could not combat his resolution dictated by so lofty a sentiment. She recognized that there was at the bottom of his words a great truth which her instinct divined; she had the proof in the revolution wrought in her own mind when she saw him in the midst of the wilderness, free, great, majestic as a king. What then might not be the consequence of that other transition, much more abrupt? In a city, in the midst of civilization, what would an Indian be but a captive, treated with contempt by all? In her heart of hearts she almost approved of Pery’s resolution, but she could not accustom herself to the thought of losing her friend, her companion, perhaps the only affection now left her on earth.

During this time the Indian was preparing the simple meal that nature offered them. He laid on a broad leaf the fruit he had gathered. This consisted of *araçás,* rosy *jambos*, *ingás* with their soft pulp, and cocoanuts of several species. Another leaf contained honeycombs, the product of a small bee that had constructed its hive in the trunk of a *cabuíba*, so that the clear, pure honey had a delicious odor. He bent into the form of a bowl a large palm leaf, and filled it with the fragrant juice of the pineapple, which was to be the wine of the frugal banquet. In a second leaf he dipped up some water from the crystal stream that murmured near, for Cecília to wash her hands in after her meal.

When he had finished these preparations, the making of which gave him extreme pleasure, Pery sat down by the maiden’s side, and began to work on a bow which he needed. The bow was his favorite weapon, and without it, although he possessed the carbine and ammunition which, by way of precaution, he had placed in the canoe for Dom Antônio’s use, he had not entire peace of mind and full confidence in his skill.

Noticing that his mistress did not touch the food, he lifted up his head and saw her face bathed in tears, which fell in pearls upon the fruit and sprinkled it like drops of dew. It was not necessary to divine in order to learn the cause of these tears.

“Do not weep, mistress,” said the Indian, pained by her grief. “Pery said what he felt; command, and Pery will do your will.”

Cecília looked at him with an expression of melancholy that tortured the soul.

“Do you wish Pery to remain with you? He will remain. Everybody will be his enemy; everybody will treat him ill; he will desire to defend you and will not be able; he will wish to serve you and they will not let him. But Pery will remain.”

“No,” answered she. “I do not exact of you this last sacrifice. You must live where you were born, Pery.”

“But you are going to cry again!”

“See,” said the maiden, drying her tears, “I am contented.”

“Now take some fruit.”

“Yes; we will dine together, as you used to dine with your sister in the forest.”

“Pery never had a sister.”

“But you have one now,” answered she with a smile.

And like a real child of the forest, the graceful girl made her meal, sharing it with her companion, and accompanying it with innocent and coquettish acts, such as she alone was capable of. Pery wondered at the abrupt change that had taken place in his mistress, and in his heart felt a pang when he thought how quickly she had become reconciled to the idea of separation. But he was not selfish, and preferred the happiness of his mistress to his own pleasure, for he lived rather in her life than his own.

AFTER the meal Pery resumed his work. Cecília, who had felt dejected and spiritless, had recovered something of her usual vivacity and grace. Her pretty face still retained the melancholy shadow left by the sad scenes she had witnessed, and especially by the final misfortune that had deprived her of her father and mother. But this grief imparted to her features an angelic expression, and a mildness and sweetness that lent a new charm to her beauty.

Leaving her companion absorbed in his work, she went to the river bank and sat down near the bushes to which the canoe was moored. Pery saw her move way; and keeping his eyes all the time upon her, proceeded with the preparation of the shoot that was to form his bow and the wild reeds that were to be his arrows. The maiden, with her face resting in her hands and her eyes fixed on the water, was absorbed in thought. At times her eyelids closed, her lips moved almost imperceptibly, and she seemed to be conversing with some invisible spirit. Again a sweet smile would rise to her lips and immediately vanish, as if the thought that had sought rest there had returned again to its hiding-place in her heart, whence it had escaped. At length she lifted up her head with the queenly air that she sometimes assumed. Her countenance exhibited a determination that called to mind the character of Dom Antônio. She had formed a resolution, a firm and unalterable resolution, to be carried out with all the strength of will and

courage that she had inherited from her father, and that slept deep down in her soul, to be revealed only in extremities. She lifted her eyes to heaven, and asked God to pardon a transgression, and at the same time to bless a good deed which she was about to perform. Her prayer was brief, but full of fervor.

In the meantime, Pery, seeing the shadows from the land spreading over the bed of the Parahyba, knew that it was time to start, and prepared to resume the voyage. As he was rising, Cecília ran to him and stood in front of him, so as to shut out the view of the river. "Do you know," said she, with a smile, "I have something to ask of you?"

That word was enough to prevent Pery from seeing anything but the eyes and lips of his mistress, which would tell him what she desired.

"I want you to gather a great quantity of cotton for me and bring me a pretty skin. Will you?"

"For what?" asked he with astonishment.

"Of the cotton I will make a dress; with the skin you can cover my feet."

Pery, more and more astonished, heard his mistress without understanding her.

"Then," said she with a smile, "you will let me remain with you; the thorns will not harm me."

The Indian stood motionless with amazement, but suddenly an exclamation escaped him, and he started to rush to the river. Cecília placed her hand on his breast and held him back. "Wait!"

"Look!" answered he with alarm, pointing to the river.

The canoe, unloosened from the tree to which it had been moored, was drifting at the mercy of the current and rapidly disappearing.

Cecília, after looking, turned to him with a smile. "I unloosed it!"

"You, mistress! Why?"

"Because we do not need it any longer."

Then fixing on her friend her pretty blue eyes, she said in the slow and serious tone that reveals a deeply-pondered thought and an unalterable resolution. "Pery cannot live with his sister in the city of the white men; his sister will remain with him in the wilderness amid the forests."

This was the thought she had been cherishing, and on which she had invoked the divine favor. It was not without some effort that she succeeded in overcoming the fears that at first assailed her, when she contemplated face to face

life remote from society, solitary and isolated. But what tie had she to bind her to the civilized world? Was she not almost a child of this region, nourished by its pure free air and its crystalline waters? The city appeared to her merely as a recollection of her earliest infancy, as a dream of her cradle; she had left Rio de Janeiro when only five years old, and had never been back there. The country had other recollections, still fresh and living; the flower of her girlhood had been fanned by its breezes; the bud had opened to the rays of its resplendent sun. Her whole life, all her happy days, all her childish pleasures lived there, spoke in those echoes, those confused murmurings, in that very silence. She belonged more to the wilderness than to the city; her habits and tastes clung more to the simple pomp of nature than to the festivities and shows of art and civilization. She decided to remain. The only happiness she could now enjoy in this world, since the loss of her family, was to live with the two beings who loved her; this happiness was not possible; she must choose one of them. Thus far her heart was carried along by an irresistible force; but afterward, ashamed of having yielded so quickly, she sought to justify herself. She then said that of her two brothers it was right to prefer him who lived only for her, who had no thought, no care, no desire, that was not inspired by her. Dom Diogo was a nobleman, the heir of his father's name; he had a future before him, a mission to fulfill in the world; he could choose a companion to cheer his life. Pery had forsaken everything for her, - his past, his present, his future, his ambition, his life, even his religion, all was swallowed up in her. She could not hesitate. Besides, Cecília had another thought. She wished to open to her friend the heaven of which her Christian faith afforded her glimpses; she wished to give him a place by her side in the mansion of the just, at the foot of the heavenly throne of the Creator.

It is impossible to describe what passed in Pery's mind as he heard Cecília's words; his untaught but brilliant intellect, capable of rising to the loftiest thoughts, could not grasp the idea; he doubted what he heard.

"Cecília remain in the wilderness?" stammered he.

"Yes," answered the maiden, taking his hands. "Cecília will remain with you and will not leave you. You are the king of these forests, these plains, these mountains; your sister will follow you."

"Always?"

"Always. We will live together as yesterday, as today, as tomorrow. I too am a child of this land; I too grew up amid this scenery. I love this beautiful country."

"But, mistress, do you not see that your hands were made for flowers and not for thorns; your feet to play and not to walk; your body for the shade and not for the sun and the rain?"

"O, I am strong!" exclaimed she proudly. "With you I am not afraid. When I am tired you can carry me in your arms. Does not the turtle dove rest on the wing of her mate?"

Pery was in ecstasy at the prospect of this great happiness, of which he had never dreamed; but he swore anew within himself to fulfill his promise to Dom Antônio.

The afternoon was waning, and it was necessary to take measures toward providing the means of passing the night on land, which would be much more dangerous; not for him, for whom the branch of a tree would serve, but for Cecília.

Following the river bank for the purpose of choosing the most favorable spot, Pery let fall a word of surprise on seeing the canoe caught in a floating island, formed of aquatic plants.

It was the best bed that the girl could have there in the wilderness. He disentangled the boat, carpeted it with soft palm leaves, and taking her in his arms laid her in her cradle. She would not permit him to row, and the canoe glided gently down the stream, driven only by the current. Cecília sported as they went, leaning over the side to pluck a flower, to pursue a fish that kissed the smooth surface of the water, to dip her hands in the crystal stream, and to view her image in that undulating mirror. When she had sported enough, she turned to her friend and talked to him in a silvery tone, with the winning prattle of a pretty child, which clothes the lightest and most frivolous themes with an indescribable charm and grace.

Pery's mind was occupied; his eye rested on the horizon with the most minute attention; the uneasiness depicted on his countenance was an indication of some danger, though still remote. Upon the blue line of the Organ mountain chain, which stood out from a background of purple and carnation, great masses of heavy black clouds were settling down, which in the rays of the setting sun assumed a copper hue.

Soon the chain disappeared beneath the clouds which covered it like a mantle. The pure and cheerful blue of the rest of the firmament contrasted strongly with the dark belt which went on deepening in hue as night approached.

Pery turned. "Would you like to go ashore, mistress?"

"No; I am so well situated here Did n't you place me here yourself?"

"Yes; but -"

"What?"

"Nothing; you can sleep without fear." It had occurred to him that of two dangers it was best to choose the more remote, that which was still distant, and perhaps would not come at all. Therefore he resolved to say nothing to Cecília, but to remain watchful, that he might save her in case what he feared should take place. Pery had fought with the tiger, with men, with a tribe of savages, with poison, and had conquered. The time had now come for him to contend with the elements. With the same calm and unmoved confidence he waited, ready to accept the struggle.

Night came on. The black and gloomy horizon was now and then lighted up by a phosphorescent flash; a dull tremor seemed to run through the bowels of the earth, causing the surface of the water to undulate like a swelling sail filled by the wind. Yet round about them all was quiet. The stars studded the blue firmament; the breeze nestled among the leaves; the soft murmuring of the solitude chanted the evening hymn. Cecília fell asleep, murmuring a prayer.

THE night was far advanced; thick darkness covered the banks of the Parahyba. All at once a dull, suppressed noise, as of an earthquake, spreading through the solitude, broke the deep silence of the wilderness.

Pery started, lifted up his head, and strained his eyes along the broad pathway of the river, which, winding like a monstrous serpent with silvery scales, was lost in the dark background of the forest. The mirror of the waters, smooth and polished as a crystal, reflected the light of the stars, which were beginning to pale with the approach of day; all was calm and motionless.

The Indian bent over the side of the canoe and applied his ear; over the surface of the river rolled a roaring sound, like that of a waterfall as it leaps from the rocks. Cecília was sleeping tranquilly.

Pery looked anxiously along the banks that rose at some distance above the placid current. He broke the knot that held the canoe, and propelled it with the whole force of the oar to the shore. On the margin of the river grew a beautiful palm tree, whose lofty trunk was crowned by a great dome of green formed by its handsome and graceful leaves. Parasitic vines twining about the branches of the neighboring trees fastened on the leaf-stalks of the palm, and fell to the ground forming festoons and curtains of foliage.

On reaching the shore Pery sprang out, took Cecília, half asleep, in his arms and plunged into the forest.

In the distance the crystal stream undulated; the waters frothed; and a sheet of foam spread over the smooth and polished surface, like a wave of the sea breaking on the sand of the shore. Soon the entire bed of the river was covered by that thin veil, which unrolled with a frightful rapidity, rustling like a mantle of silk. Then back in the forest was heard a deafening crash, which was borne echoing over the intervening distance, like the report of thunder rolling through the mountain ravines. It was too late! There was no time to fly; the water was rushing on, furious, invincible, devouring space like some monster of the wilderness.

Pery formed the speedy resolution demanded by the imminence of the peril. Instead of penetrating into the forest, he grasped one of the vines, and climbing to the top of the palm tree found shelter there for himself and Cecília.

The maiden, violently awakened, asked what was the matter.

“The water!” answered he, pointing to the horizon.

And in fact a white, phosphorescent mountain rose to view through the gigantic archways of the forest, and rushed upon the bed of the river, roaring like the ocean when it beats the rocks with its waves.

The torrent passed quickly, outstrip ping in its career the tapir of the woods or the ostrich of the desert; its enormous back twisted and wound among the ancient trunks of the giant trees, which shook under the herculean onset.

Then another mountain, and another, and another, rose in the recesses of the forest, and rushed furiously on, crushing with their weight everything that opposed their progress. It was as if the Parahyba, rising like a new Briareus, had reached out its hundred Titanic arms, and clasped to its breast, strangling it in a horrible convulsion, that ancient forest, which had its birth with creation. The trees, cracked and torn up by the roots or broken off, fell prostrate upon the giant, who bearing them on his shoulder hurried onward to the ocean. The noise of those mountains of water, the uproar of the torrent, formed a horrid concert, worthy of the majestic drama it accompanied. Darkness enveloped the picture and revealed to the sight only the silvery reflections of the foam and the black wall that encircled that vast enclosure, where one of the elements reigned as sovereign. Cecília, leaning on the shoulder of her friend, witnessed in horror that fearful spectacle; Pery felt her body tremble, but her lips uttered not a complaint, not a single cry of fear. In the presence of such solemn tragedies, such great convulsions of nature, the human soul feels its own littleness, its own nothingness, and fear is replaced by silent awe.

The sun, dispelling the darkness of night, appeared in the east, illuminating the scene; the waves of its light rolled in cascades over an immense, unbounded lake. All was water and sky.

The inundation had covered the banks of the river as far as the eye could reach; the vast quantities of water that the tempest during an entire night had poured out upon the sources of the constituents of the Parahyba, had flowed down from the mountains, and in torrent after torrent had swept over the plain. The storm still continued along the whole range, which seemed covered by a dense mist; but the clear, blue sky looked down smilingly upon its reflection in the lake.

The water kept rising; the small trees disappeared; and now only the summits of the loftiest rose above the surface. The dome of the palm tree on which Pery and Cecília were seated resembled an island of verdure bathing in the waters of the stream; the expanding leaves formed in the center a charming cradle, where the two friends embracing each other petitioned heaven for one death for both, as their lives were one.

Cecília awaited the last moment with the sublime resignation that only the religion of Christ can impart; she would die happy, - Pery had mingled their souls in the last prayer that had ascended from his lips. “We can die, my friend!” said she, with a sublime expression.

Pery started; even in this supreme hour his mind rebelled against that thought, and could not comprehend that the life of his mistress must go out like that of a mere mortal.

“No!” exclaimed he. “You cannot die.“

The maiden smiled sweetly. “Look!” said she, with her tender voice, “the wais rising, rising -“

“What matters it! Pery will prevail over the water as he prevailed over all your enemies.”

“If it were an enemy you might prevail over him, Pery. But it is God.”

“Do you not know,” said the Indian, inspired by his ardent love, “the Lord of heaven sometimes sends to those whom he loves a good thought?” And he lifted up his eyes with an ineffable expression of gratitude.

He spoke in a solemn tone: -

“It was long, very long ago. The waters fell and began to cover the whole earth. The men ascended to the summits of the mountains; only one remained in the plain with his wife.

“It was Tamandaré, mighty among the mighty; he knew more than all. The Lord spoke to him by night, and by day he taught the sons of the tribe what he learned from heaven.

“When all ascended the mountains, he said: ‘Remain with me; do as I do, and let the water come.’

“The others did not listen to him, but went to the mountain tops and left him alone in the plain with his companion, who did not forsake him.”

“Tamandaré took his wife in his arms and went up with her into the top of the palm tree; there he waited for the water to come and go; the palm tree furnished fruit to feed him.

“The water came, rose, and increased; the sun sank and rose once, twice, three times. The land disappeared; the tree disappeared; the mountain disappeared.

“The water reached heaven, and the Lord then commanded it to stop. The sun looking saw only sky and water, and between the water and the sky the palm tree floating, and carrying Tamandaré and his companion.

“The current excavated the earth; excavating the earth, it uprooted the palm tree; the palm tree uprooted rose with it, - rose above the valley, above the tree, above the mountain.

“All died. The water touched heaven three days and three nights; then it fell, - fell till it uncovered the earth.

“When day came Tamandaré saw that the palm tree was planted in the midst of the plain, and heard the bird of heaven, the *guanumby*, beating its wings.

“He descended with his companion, and peopled the earth.”

Pery had spoken in the inspired tone that springs from profound belief, with the enthusiasm of souls rich in poetry and sentiment. Cecília heard him with a smile on her lips, and drank in one by one his words, as if they were the particles of air that she breathed; it seemed to her that the soul of her friend, so noble and lovely, left his body at each of those solemn sentences, and took refuge in her heart, which opened to receive it.

The water, still rising wet the leaves of the palm tree, and a drop found its way to Cecília's dress. By an instinctive impulse of terror she drew closer to her friend, and in that supreme moment when the inundation was opening its enormous jaws to swallow them, murmured softly: "My God - Pery!"

Pery in a frenzy stepped upon the tough vines interlaced among the stout branches of the trees already covered with water, and with a desperate effort grasped the palm in his stiffened arms and shook it to the roots. Three times his iron muscles contorting bent the lusty trunk, and three times his body bowed as the tree violently rebounded to the position that nature had assigned to it.

There was a moment of rest, during which he concentrated all his strength for a final effort.

The struggle that ensued was terrible; it seemed that his body must yield to the dreadful strain. The tree rocked to and fro; and the earth, already under mined by the water, became loosened, and the roots gave way. The dome of the palm tree, floating gracefully, glided over the surface of the water like a moving island formed of aquatic plants.

Pery seated himself anew by the side of his almost inanimate mistress, and taking her in his arms said in a tone of supreme happiness: - "You shall live!"

Cecília opened her eyes, and seeing her friend by her side and hearing again his words, felt a celestial joy.

"Yes!" murmured she, "we shall live! - there in heaven, in the bosom of God, by the side of those we love!" Her soul was preparing to take its flight. "Above that azure we see," continued she, "God dwells on his throne, surrounded by adoring multitudes. We shall go there, Pery! You shall live with your sister forever!"

Her eyes rested lovingly on those of her friend, and her fair head fell back languidly. Pery's ardent breath fanned her cheek. A nest of chaste blushes and limpid smiles overspread the maiden's face; her lips opened like the purple wings of a kiss taking its flight.

The palm tree, borne along by the impetuous torrent, hurried on and disappeared in the distance.

* *

[1] The translator chose not to include a lengthy description of the coat of arms. (Editor's note)

[2] The ancient territorial divisions of Brazil were called captanias, captaincies.

[3] A town in Morocco, where in 1578 Dom Sebastian, King of Portugal, with his whole army perished in battle against the Moors. This disaster was followed by a Spanish domination in Portugal of 60 years (1580-1640).

[4] A Brazilian province on the coast, south of and bordering on that of Rio de Janeiro. The first white settlement in Brazil under the auspices of the Portuguese government was made within its present limits. Its inhabitants are still noted for pride of origin.

[5] The city of Rio de Janeiro, the full name of which is São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro.

[6] The jaguar, called also onça (ounce) and tigre (tiger) by the Brazilians.

[7] A species of palm, of the fibers of which the Indians make nets, ropes, etc.

[8] Bahia, the full name of which is *São Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos*.

[9] A species of palm.

[10] A night bird.

[11] A pretty bird of a golden color with wings of a brilliant black. It derives its name from its note.

[12] A tall tree, producing fruit similar to the cocoanut.

[13] A tall tree, bearing in September and October, a small, bright scarlet flower.

[14] A small black bird, said to be the first to hail with its song the approach of day.

[15] Aquatic birds.

[16] Also called the balsam tree (*balsamum Peruvianum*), said to have miraculous efficacy for the cure of fresh wounds.

[17] A very venomous serpent.

[18] A very savage race of Indians, much dreaded by other tribes and by the whites. After battle they ate the bodies of the slain amid ceremonious festivities. A remnant exists in the Botocudos, now dwelling in parts of the provinces of

Bahia, Espírito Santo, and Minas Gerais. Some of the Botocudos are domesticated, others still savage. These disfigure themselves by wearing disks of wood in slits in the ears and under lip.

[19] A village of Portugal, near Lisbon.

[20] In Guarany, *Man of Fire*, a name given by the natives to Diogo Álvares, who in 1510 was shipwrecked near Bahia, and by means of his fire-arms gained much influence over the Indians. He married the daughter of a chief, and was of much assistance in the subsequent settlement of that region. To him the aristocratic families of Bahia are fond of tracing their lineage. Fact and fiction are greatly mingled in the accounts of this man. José de Santa Rita Durão, a Brazilian poet, wrote an epic on the discovery of Brazil, entitled Caramuru. (Lisbon, 1781.)

[21] A Portuguese poet of the first half of the 16th century.

[22] September, when several species of trees are covered with yellow flowers.

[23] Pery signifies wild reed in Guarany.

[24] A bird resembling the nightingale in its song.

[25] Of the genus *Eugenia* (order *Myrtacea*), several species of which yield fruit, among the finest of tropical regions, and remarkable for a delicious balsamic odor.

[26] [ ] This title, missed out in Overland's edition, was included according to the original. (Editor's note).

[27] [ ] Included words.

[28] A bird that devours snakes, which greatly dread and shun it. The Indians used to imitate its note as a protection.

[29] A blue bird.

[30] The chief town of the island of Ferro, one of the Canaries.

[31] A fermented liquor.

[32] A thorny plant, a species of cactus.

[33] A species of mocking-bird.

[34] A nocturnal bird.

[35] The Indian name of the humming-bird.

[36] The Guarany for canoe.

[37] The Guarany for gull.